Weston under Penyard Parish
Neighbourhood Plan
planning the future where you live

Weston under Penyard

Neighbourhood Development Plan

2011 - 2031

Post Examination Version December 2015

Version 5

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Weston under Penyard Parish
Neighbourhood Plan
planning the future where you live

Foreword

Neighbourhood development plans are being produced to meet the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions which affect them. Our Neighbourhood Plan (the "Plan") has been developed to establish a vision for the parish and to help deliver the local community's aspirations and needs for the Plan period 2011 – 2031. Unlike the Weston under Penyard Parish Plan 2006, our Neighbourhood Development Plan is a statutory document that will be incorporated into the district planning framework and must be used by Herefordshire Council to determine planning applications in the parish.

Our Plan has been produced by the Steering Group, with the support of the Parish Council, using the views of the residents of Weston under Penyard. The Steering Group has consulted and listened to the community and local organisations on a wide range of issues that will influence the well-being, sustainability and long-term preservation of our rural community. Every effort has been made to ensure that the views and policies contained in this document reflect the views of Weston under Penyard parish residents.

Some of the key benefits of the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan are to:

- protect the village from uncontrolled, large scale, or poorly placed development;
- provide the development required by Herefordshire's Core Strategy at locations preferred by the community;
- ensure that development is sympathetic to, and improves, the look and feel of the village;
- take steps to give residents preferred access to affordable homes;
- give the village the potential to access Community Infrastructure Levy funding to improve village facilities; and
- identify, in Annex 1 of the Plan, additional actions to improve Weston under Penyard's facilities, services and local environment and to address any issues deemed to be beyond the scope of the Policies of the Plan.

Weston under Penyard Parish Council received over 50 separate responses to the pre-submission version of the Plan. In total the responses contained over 200 distinct comments from residents, businesses, landowners/agents, statutory/advisory bodies and neighbouring parishes. Each comment was individually considered by the Steering Group and responses provided and approved by the Parish Council. Overall, the Plan was very well received and the bulk of the comments required no change to the Plan. Others clarified policies or produced minor changes to the Plan.

In November 2015 the government's Independent Examiner approved the Plan for Referendum, subject to some minor changes that have been incorporated in this Version 5.

An electronic copy of this Plan can be found online at www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

The Parish Council would like to thank the members of the Steering Group and pay tribute to their dedication in the production of our Plan over the last 18 months. The Parish Council is also grateful for the help and the engagement of many others in the village without which it would not have been possible to produce this Neighbourhood Plan.

Susan Lewis **Chair, Weston under Penyard Parish Council**

Section 1: Introduction and Background

1.1 Purpose

In April 2012 the Localism Act 2011[1] amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (the Act) introducing new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their community by preparing a neighbourhood development plan through which general planning policies for the development and use of land in the neighbourhood area can be established.

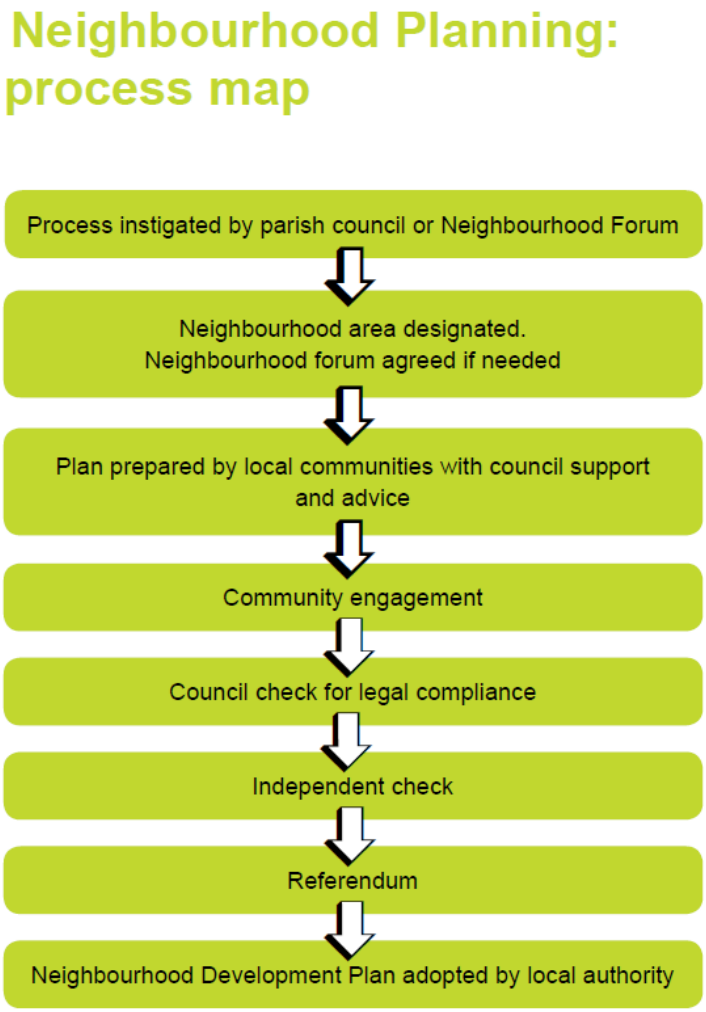
The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) is a new type of planning document based on the views of our local residents, businesses, services and community groups, and on the evidence of survey and statistical information concerning the wider area.

The Plan reflects the enthusiasm of residents, demonstrated throughout the Plan preparation process, for taking the opportunity to make our parish an even better place in which to live.

Once the Plan has been made, following a favourable local referendum, it will have force of law and, as an integral part of the Herefordshire Council's Local Plan and in compliance with the Herefordshire Council Core Strategy (HC Core Strategy),[2] will become the starting point for deciding what development should and should not take place in the parish.

[1] Localism Act 2011 - Which received Royal Assent on 15th November 2011

[2] The HC Core Strategy is a key document in Herefordshire's Local Plan, which provides the strategic planning framework for the County's future development needs up to 2031. Herefordshire Council submitted the draft Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 23 September 2014. Public hearing sessions were held from 10 to 25 February 2015, as a result of which some modifications were made. A six week period of consultation was carried out on these modifications between 20 March and 1 May 2015.



1.2 The Context

Because a Neighbourhood Plan will have legal status, the Plan must:

1) Comply with requirements of the Localism Act,
2) Have appropriate regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[3]
3) Be in general conformity with the HC Core Strategy.
4) Be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements
5) Contribute to sustainable development

Adherence to these requirements is demonstrated in the document "Compliance Statement July 2015".

The Plan is written in accordance with the evidence provided in the consultation process as detailed in the document "Consultation Statement July 2015".

The policies in this Plan take account of these requirements, in particular, that the rural settlements of the "Rural Area 1 (RA1) Ross on Wye Housing Market Area"[4] are required by the HC Core Strategy to set a minimum housing growth target of 14% between 2011 and 2031.

[3] Issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework is a key part of the government's reforms to make the planning system less complex and more accessible.

[4] Part of the Core Strategy relevant to Weston under Penyard

This Plan is submitted by Weston under Penyard Parish Council, which is a "qualifying body" as defined by the Localism Act 2011. The Plan applies only to the parish of Weston under Penyard in Herefordshire.

1.3 Plan Period, Monitoring and Review

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan will run concurrently with the HC Core Strategy and apply until the 31st March 2031. It is, however, a response to the needs and aspirations of the local community as understood today and it is recognised that current challenges and concerns are likely to change over the plan period.

Weston under Penyard Parish Council, as the Neighbourhood Plan authority, will be responsible for maintaining and periodically revisiting the Plan to ensure relevance and to monitor delivery, as described in Section 11 of the Plan.

1.4 Record of Versions

Version 1:
Draft Neighbourhood Plan issued to Parish Council for review in Parish Council Meeting 13th April 2015.
Version 2:
Revised draft Neighbourhood Plan issued to Parish Council for review in Meeting 30th April 2015.
Version 3:
For pre-submission public consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan under Regulation 14
Version 4
Submission version of Neighbourhood Plan submitted to Herefordshire Council 30th July 2015 under Regulation 15.
Version 5
Post Examination Version of Neighbourhood Plan for Referendum

Section 2: Weston under Penyard - Our Parish

Introduction

This section of the Plan:

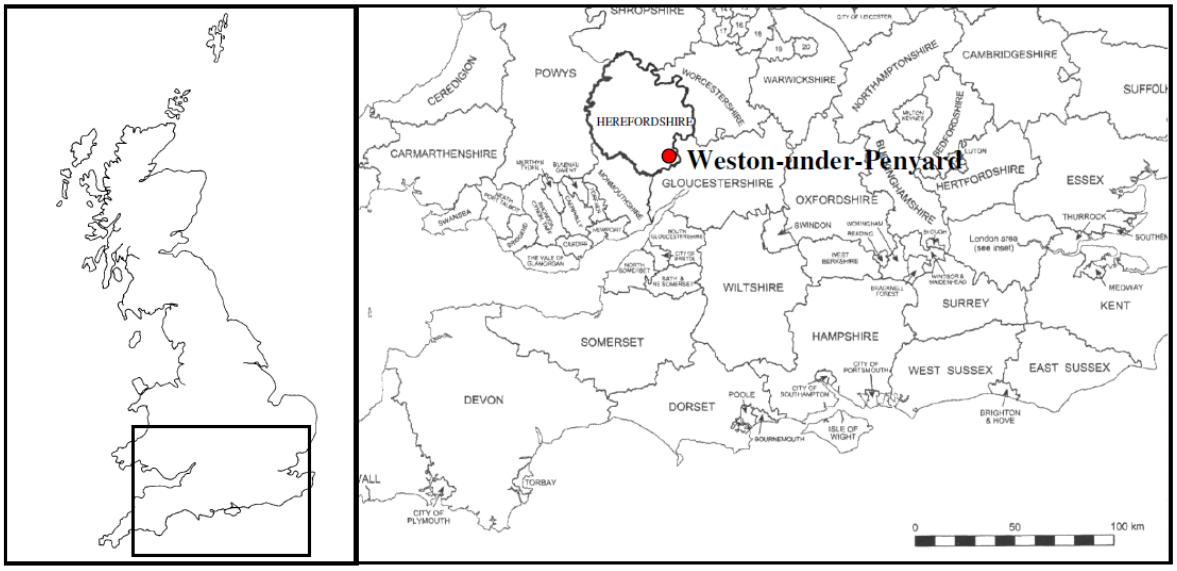
- Provides a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Area[5]; its location, surroundings, size, housing, heritage and a summary of what residents think about life therein;
- Identifies the challenges facing the Neighbourhood Area.

Location

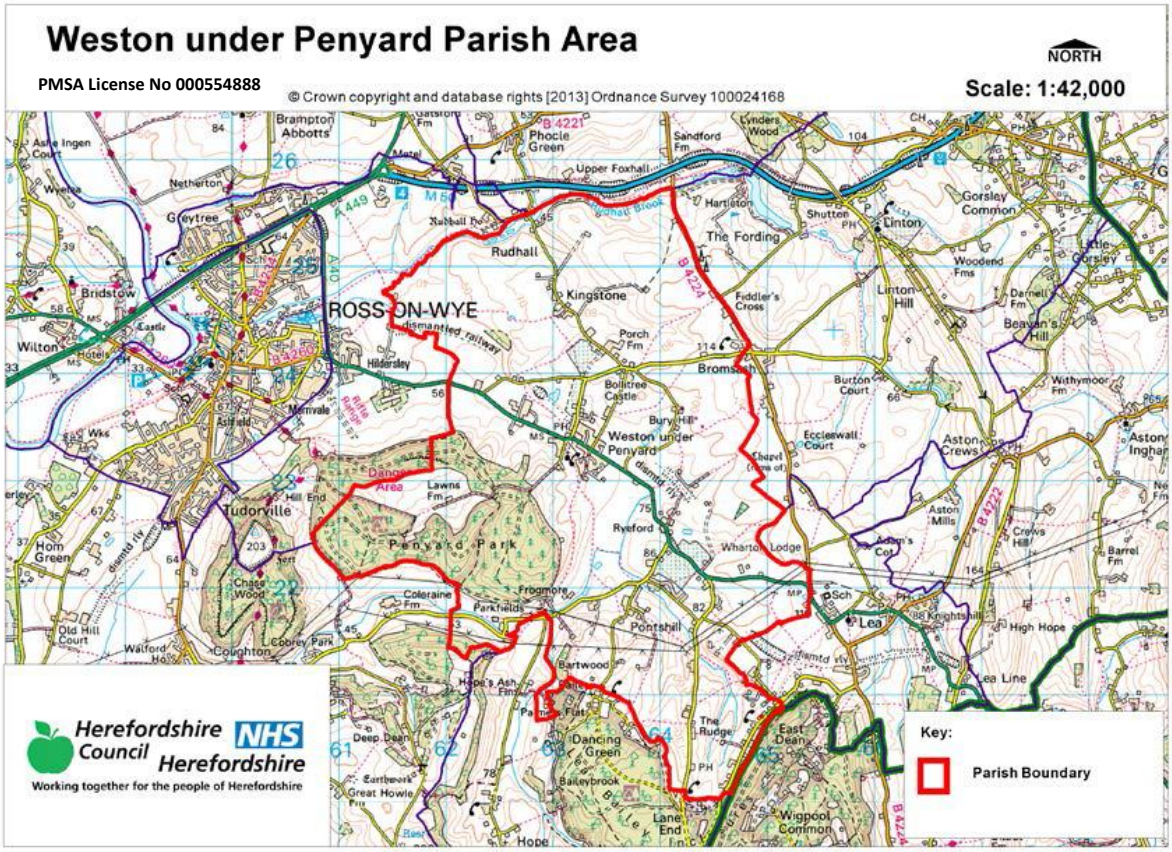
This Neighbourhood Plan applies to the Neighbourhood Area which is specifically the parish of Weston under Penyard in Herefordshire.

Weston under Penyard lies 2 miles east of Ross-on-Wye in Herefordshire. The main road running through the parish is the A40. It is approximately 18 miles to Hereford, 14 miles to Ledbury, 14 miles to Monmouth, 15 miles to Gloucester, 60 miles to Birmingham, 48 miles to Bristol, 50 miles to Cardiff and 125 miles to London.

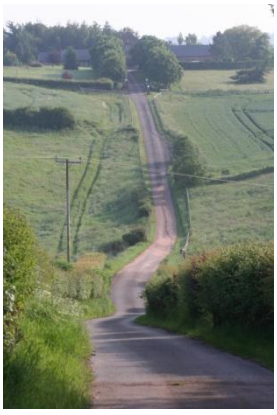
Location Map



5 Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate. In the case of this Plan this is the parish of Weston under Penyard.



Landscape



Weston under Penyard parish has a high quality landscape comprising a range of features that contribute towards the quality of the countryside and the settings of its villages. It includes two types of landscape, as defined by the Herefordshire Council Landscape Character Assessment.[6] These are Principle Settled Farmland and Principle Wooded Hills.

These landscapes fall into two distinct regional character areas, namely; Archenfield and Forest of Dean. Strategically placed, the parish lies on the western edge of the Forest of Dean and within the catchment area of the Wye Valley AONB which lies immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the parish.

The undulating nature of the landscape provides numerous points of scenic beauty. From various locations there are magnificent views west across the Wye valley to the Black Mountains in Wales, east to May Hill and southerly over Pontshill towards Lea Bailey, the Forest of Dean and of Penyard Hill. This rich tapestry must be protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy.

At its highest point the Neighbourhood Area is 200 metres above sea level; at its lowest some 50 metres

Heritage

There are 30 Listed Buildings throughout the parish including two

[6] A landscape character assessment for Herefordshire, which was adopted as supplementary planning guidance in 2004 and updated in 2009.

in the Grade One category (See Appendix A). There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments; the Roman town of Ariconium and Penyard Castle;

Connections

Weston under Penyard is 14 miles, 15 miles and 18 miles respectively from railway stations at Ledbury, Gloucester and Hereford.

By car the M50 is three miles away, providing a link to the M5. Three miles away is a link to dual carriageways leading to the M4 and South Wales.

A bus service operates between Weston under Penyard and Ross on Wye and Gloucester. The frequency is generally hourly but few buses run in the evening. Reduction in the service is occurring as part of Herefordshire's plan to reduce costs through to 2017.

Population[7]

The population of the parish in 2011 was 1,005, including 125 children under the age of 16. The population in the 2001 census was 834.

The population had increased by 21% since 2002. The percentage increase in the population between 2001 and 2011 was more than 5 times higher than the percentage change in the population of Herefordshire as a whole and 3 times higher than for England as a whole during that period.

In October 2013 there were 445 households in the parish. These included 60 single pensioner households and 140 pensioner households altogether; this was well above the average for England. 275 people were over 65, double the average percentage for England. There were 5 lone parent families with children, in this case well below the average for England. There were 605 adults of working age. 30 people were from ethnic minorities and 40 people were born outside the UK. Most people in the parish who were born outside England were born in Wales.

Employment[8]

The largest employment sector for residents in 2011 was retail (85 employees). The next largest employment sectors were health and social work (55 employees) and education (also 55 employees). 140 residents were employed in the public sector.

22% of residents in employment were in managerial occupations. 28% of residents in employment were in professional or associated occupations, 14% worked in skilled trades and only 8% in elementary occupations.

109 residents were in part-time employment, 135 were self-employed and 75 were working from home.

The average weekly household income was above the national average. There were 45 working age benefit claimants in 2012, half the average for England.

315 residents aged 16 and over had degree level qualifications in 2011, over 35% of the over 16s in the parish and well above the average for England. 170 residents over 16 had no academic qualifications, which was below the average for England.

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7 ACRE Report www.ocsi.co.uk

8 ACRE Report

Housing[9]

In 2011 there were 294 detached houses in the parish, representing 62% of the housing stock and well above the average in England of 22%. There were also 100 semi-detached and 60 terraced houses.

345 dwellings were owner-occupied, i.e. 78% of households and well above the 64% owner-occupation average across England. 33 homes were privately rented and 49 dwellings were rented from registered housing providers or from the local authority. Owner-occupation declined and private renting went up nationally between 2001 and 2011.

15 households lived in overcrowded conditions and 60 households were estimated to be in 'fuel poverty', which is above average for England. 11 households lacked central heating. In 2011 there were 29 vacant household spaces, equivalent to 6% of households in the parish.

The Natural Environment

The nationally designated Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is immediately adjacent to the parish boundary at the western edge of Penyard Hill (see SEA Map 1 below).

There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation, National Nature Reserves or Conservation Target Areas within the Neighbourhood Area.

However there are the following European Sites just outside the parish of Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Area

- River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC
- Wye Valley Woodlands SAC
- Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC

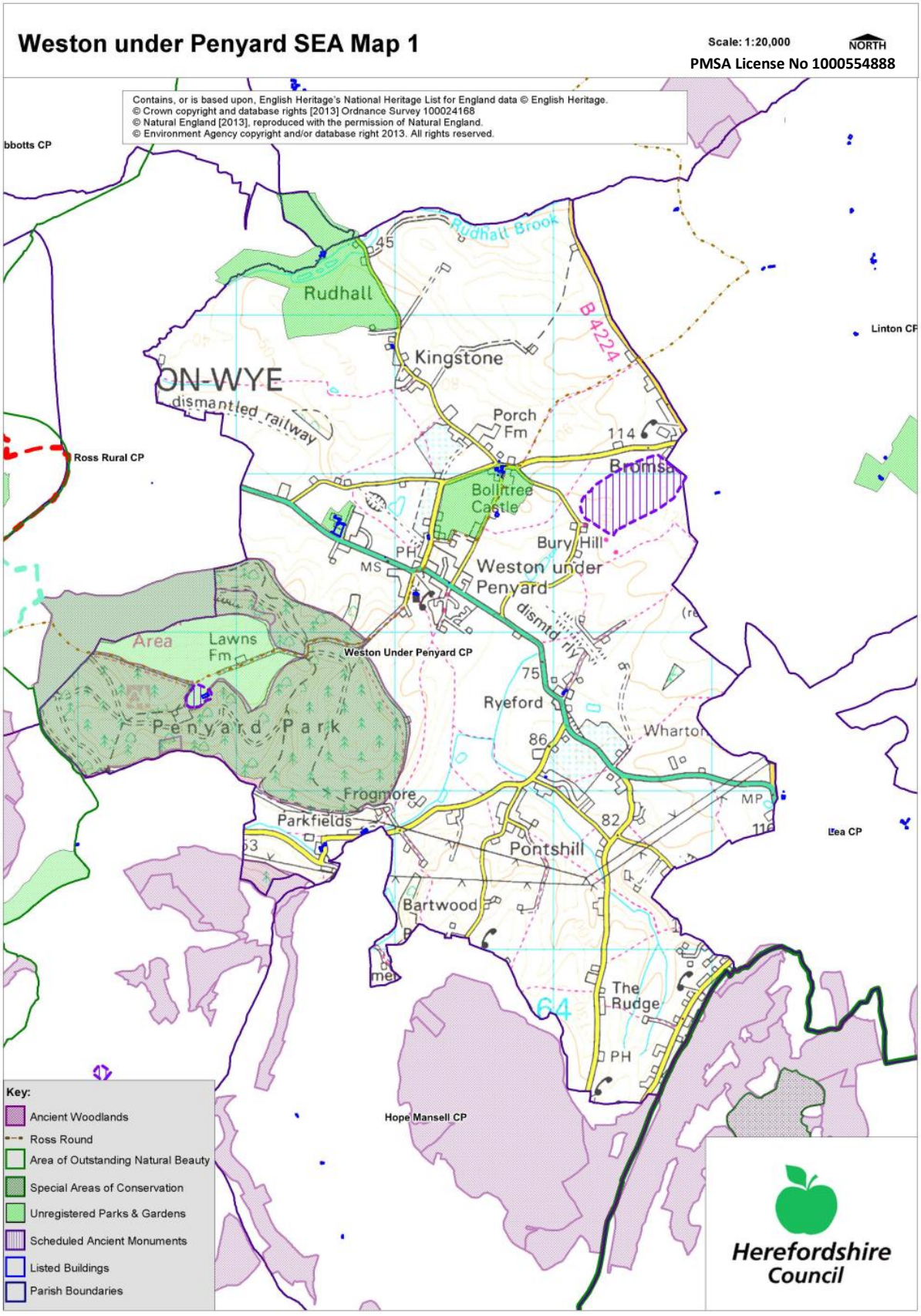
Flood Zones run along the Rudhall Brook. There are also Flood Zones along a stream/brook in the south west of the Parish which runs through to Pontshill

Most of Penyard Hill (The Penyard) is within the parish of Weston under Penyard. According to *Parks and Gardens UK,*[10] part of Penyard Hill, known as Penyard Park, is a former mediaeval hunting ground, part royal forest and part paled park. In mediaeval times the park belonged partly to the Bishops of Hereford and partly to the monarch. The lawn within Penyard Park formerly contained a hunting lodge called Penyard Castle.

Penyard Hill is made up of the Brownstones Formation with a quartz conglomerate. The rocks were laid down in the Devonian Period (around 400 million years ago) when this area was south of the equator in a hot and arid climate. It is understood that at one time the River Wye flowed through Weston under Penyard and then west to Coughton, carving out the valley to the south of Penyard Hill.

The majority of land within the neighbourhood area was listed Grade 2 (Good) or Grade 3 (Good to Moderate) for its agricultural quality.[11]

[9] ACRE Report
[10] Parks & Gardens UK is managed by the Charity Parks and Gardens Data Services (PGDS). www.parksandgardens.org
[11] Natural England: 2011West Midland ALC Map.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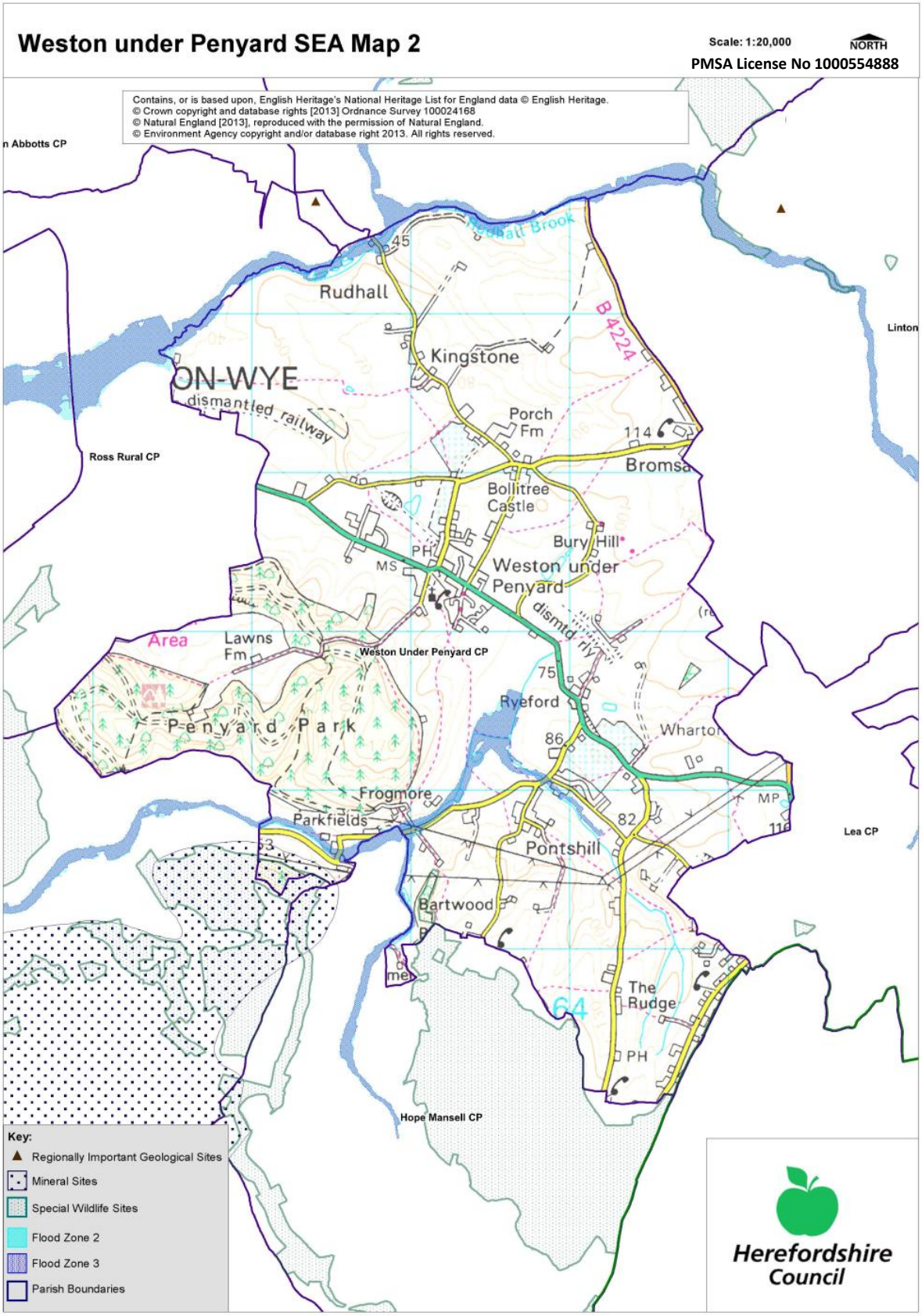
Rudhall
Rudhall Brook
Kingstone
B4224
Linton CP
ON-WYE
dismantled railway
Porch Fm
Ross Rural CP
Bollitree Castle
Bury Hill
Weston under Penyard
Weston Under Penyard CP
Area
Lawns Fm
Penyard Park
Ryeford
Wharton
Frogmore
Parkfields
Pontshill
Bartwood
The Rudge
Hope Mansell CP
Key:
Ancient Woodlands
Ross Round
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Special Areas of Conservation
Unregistered Parks & Gardens
Scheduled Ancient Monuments
Listed Buildings
Parish Boundaries
Herefordshire Council


Weston under Penyard SEA Map 2
Scale: 1:20,000
NORTH
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Rudhall
Kingstone
B4224
Linton
Ross Rural CP
dismantled railway
Porch Fm
Bollitree Castle
Bromsash
Bury Hill
Weston under Penyard
Weston Under Penyard CP
Lawns Fm
Area
Penyard Park
Ryeford
Wharton
Frogmore
Parkfields
Pontshill
Lea CP
Bartwood
The Rudge
Hope Mansell CP
Key:
Regionally Important Geological Sites
Mineral Sites
Special Wildlife Sites
Flood Zone 2
Flood Zone 3
Parish Boundaries
Herefordshire Council

Living in the Neighbourhood Area

The historic St Lawrence's church, a village hall, a recreation ground, a small primary school and the Weston Cross Inn public house are all located in the central village of Weston under Penyard (Weston village). The last shop closed well over 20 years ago.

The 2006 Parish Plan observed that parishioners of Weston under Penyard considered themselves reasonably comfortable and safe, living in a most pleasant and tranquil rural setting. Parishioners were generally well-informed, caring and committed, many were able to participate in a range of social and other activities organised by diverse groups within the parish, with particular focal points being the village hall, the primary school, the parish church and the Weston Cross Inn.

The 2011 census notes that recorded crime in Herefordshire is only two thirds of the overall level for England.

Comments from the Residents' Survey 2014

Despite the general satisfaction expressed by the parishioners no community is perfect and, as identified in the 2014 Residents' survey report, the parish faces challenges.

Residents generally accepted that additional houses needed to be built, but less than a half of respondents (41%) thought the numbers should exceed 30 during the life of this Plan. Only 19% were agreeable to more than 50 houses. Residents said they did not want large housing developments, with only 11% agreeable to developments with more than 10 houses. Smaller lower cost houses were desirable to encourage younger people to settle in the parish

The design of new houses was important for residents, including scale and style, use of traditional materials, adequate living space, energy conservation and appropriate off-street parking.

Traffic was a major concern for residents, the three most important being, traffic speed, pedestrian safety and the size of vehicles in relation to the size of the roads. Associated with these traffic issues residents wanted to see improved footpaths, new cycleways and better maintenance of roads and footpaths.

Large numbers of residents thought that the protection and enhancement of the natural environment, green spaces, views and historic buildings was very important.

In terms of local services and facilities the top five items needing improvement were broadband, mobile phone coverage, facilities for young people, footpaths and cycleways. The most important aspects of community living to improve the parish as a place to live were considered to be attracting younger people to live in the parish, energy efficient houses and walking, cycling, and bus travel (less driving).

Section 3: Vision and Objectives

The Vision and Objectives were initially derived from the opinions of residents attending the neighbourhood plan Launch Event in June 2014, later validated by the questionnaire survey and another Open Event in December 2015 and approved by the Parish Council in March 2015.

THE VISION

To be a parish where an excellent quality of life is available to all, where people are valued and where there are homes, businesses and facilities to meet the needs of a sustainable rural community.

This will mean that by 2031:

- There is sufficient housing to meet the needs of local people and which is of mixed types, well designed, in keeping with our local character, suitably located and including affordable homes,
- Local facilities including, village hall, school, pub, sport and leisure spaces are supported and enhanced,
- The development of agriculture as a business is supported and the quality and quantity of agricultural land provision is given due weight when development is considered,
- Roads, footpaths and cycle-ways meet the needs of the community and are safe and maintained in good condition,
- There are more businesses in the parish providing additional employment opportunities.
- We are in control of the future development of our parish, in particular, the boundaries of our villages are respected and any amendments will have been made with care and consideration.
- New residents are welcomed, people feel safe and community involvement and spirit is actively encouraged.

OBJECTIVES

1. Housing	2. Opportunities for Employment	3. Environmental Sustainability	4. Roads and Traffic	5. Community Services and Facilities
Policies incorporated in the Plan will ensure that new housing contributes to a sustainable and balanced community, in particular through: • providing a mix of properties in terms of size and tenure • designs that are sensitive to and in keeping with our respective settlements • satisfying locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes • controlling the level of new housing such that there are sufficient numbers but without over-provision	The Plan will include proposals and policies to enable more people to work where they live or closer to their homes through: • attracting businesses and employment suitable for a rural area • supporting appropriate development and diversification of agriculture, tourism and hospitality within the rural economy	The Plan will contribute towards sustainable development through: • protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, especially the parish's heritage, habitats and open spaces • safeguarding agricultural land • maintaining a high quality landscape, built environment and settings of settlements • reducing flood risk • moving towards being carbon neutral	Within the Plan will be proposals to reduce the effects of traffic on the community so that: • residents are safe using local roads , cycleways and footpaths • roads do not create an unreasonable physical barrier between residents • traffic can move freely but without excessive speed • new development does not make road conditions worse • footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are created to provide carbon free transport alternatives •	To foster community spirit by: • maintaining and supporting existing services and facilities • enhancing the present educational, leisure and recreational facilities • the introduction of high quality broadband and mobile phone coverage in all parts of the parish

Section 4: The Policies

4.1 Structure of the Policies Sections

The following Sections 4 through 10 contain policies derived from the vision and objectives set out in Section 3. The views of the residents, as expressed in questionnaire surveys and live consultations, were fully taken into account in the development of these policies.

It is important that development applicants and decision-makers consider the policies as a whole in order to assess whether a proposal would be acceptable. Every policy has been framed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework and the emerging HC Core Strategy.

Planning is predominantly about the use of land. However, the draft HC Core Strategy makes it clear that neighbourhood planning covers all of the aspects of infrastructure necessary to support a sustainable community. Therefore, any matters that cannot be covered by the planning policies themselves will be managed through "*non-statutory enabling policies*" or "*projects*" within Annex 1 of this Plan.

To aid identification, policies have been coded as indicated in the Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1

Policy Area	Code	Section Number
Housing Policies	H and HS	5
Design Policies	D	6
Sustainable Development	SD	7
Sustainable Transport Policies	ST	8
Supporting Local Business	SB	9
Sustainable Environment Policies	SE	10

4.2 Policies to Meet the Objectives

OBJECTIVE	POLICIES
1. Housing	**Section 5: Housing Policies** **Section 6: Design Policies**
Policies incorporated in the Plan will ensure that new housing contributes to a sustainable and balanced community, in particular through: • Providing a mix of properties in terms of size and tenure, • Designs that are sensitive to and in keeping with our respective settlements, • Satisfying locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes, • Controlling the level of new housing such that there are sufficient numbers but without over-provision.	Policy H1: Number of New Houses Policy H2: Location of New Developments Policy H3: Housing Mix and Tenancy Policy H4: Type of Housing Policy H5: Provision of Affordable Housing Policy H6: Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Site Policy H7: Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People Policy D1: Design Appearance Policy D2: Technical Design Policy HS1 Housing Site Policy Policy HS2 Housing Site Policy
2. Opportunities for Employment	**Section 9: Supporting Local Business**
The Plan will include proposals and policies to enable more people to work where they live or closer to their homes through: • Attracting businesses and employment suitable for a rural area, • Supporting appropriate development and diversification of agriculture, tourism and hospitality within the rural economy.	Policy SB1: Supporting Local Business Policy SB2: Work Space Development Policy SB3: Change of use Policy SB4: Provision of Broadband and Mobile Telephone Services
3. Environmental Sustainability	**Section 10: Sustainable Environment Policies**
The Plan will contribute towards sustainable development through: • Protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, especially the parish's heritage, habitats and open spaces, • Safeguarding agricultural land, • Maintaining a high quality landscape, built environment and settings of settlements, • Reducing flood risk, • Moving towards being carbon neutral.	Policy SE1: Sustaining the parish environment and landscape Policy SE2: Sustaining Local Heritage and Character Policy SE3: Sustaining open spaces Policy SE4 : Polytunnel Development Policy SE5: Renewable Energy Policy SE6: Sustainable Water Management
4. Roads and Traffic	**Section 8: Sustainable Transport Policies**
Within the Plan will be proposals to reduce the effects of traffic on the community so that: • Residents are safe using local roads , cycleways and footpaths, • Roads do not create an unreasonable physical barrier between residents, • Traffic can move freely but without excessive speed • New development does not make road conditions worse, • Footpaths, cycleways and bridleways are created to provide carbon free transport alternatives.	Policy ST1: Accommodating Traffic within the Parish
5. Community Services and Facilities	**Section 7: Sustainable Development**
To foster community spirit by: • Maintaining and supporting existing services and facilities, • Enhancing the present educational, leisure and recreational facilities, • The introduction of high quality broadband and mobile phone coverage in all parts of the parish.	Policy SD1: Community facilities

Section 5: Housing Policies

5.1 Introduction

The parish of Weston under Penyard lies in rolling countryside approximately two miles to the east of the market town of Ross-On-Wye. Weston village is at the centre of the parish and is bisected by the A40 which joins Ross with Gloucester. It provides the amenities of school, pub, village hall, recreational playing fields and church. There is no shop. Weston village is where most new housing has been built since 2001.

Residents living in the parish and other people working here depend on motorcars for transport. Buses do run along the A40 but the service is limited and at best only hourly during peak times.

In April 2011 465 homes [12]were recorded throughout the parish, in Weston village and in several settlements, the largest of which are Pontshill and Bromsash (the majority of Bromsash lies in the neighbouring parish of Linton).

57% of the homes are grouped in the three main settlements:

- Weston village 155 homes
- Pontshill 88 homes
- Bromsash 15 homes (within the parish of Weston under Penyard)

Away from the A40 all the settlements are connected by a network of minor roads. There is a regular but infrequent bus service to Gloucester and to Ross-On-Wye (and on to Hereford) with bus-stops in Weston and Ryeford. Private transport is essential for many residents.

The population of the parish has increased from 834 in 2002 to 1005 in 2013, an increase of 20.5% which is five times higher than the percentage change in the population of Herefordshire as a whole and three times higher than for England. This population is ageing. In 2013, the number over 65 years was 275, double the average percentage for England. There were 140 pensioner households of which 60 were single pensioner households. The number of young people has fallen.

Regarding housing in the parish, in 2011 there were:

- 294 detached houses, representing 62% of the housing stock, which is nearly three times the average for England of 22%.
- 100 semi-detached houses
- 60 terraced houses
- 345 owner-occupied dwellings, i.e. 78% of the total number of households and well above the average for England of 64%,
- 33 privately rented and
- 49 homes rented from registered housing providers or the local authority.

(The above excludes list flats and mobile homes)

Housing prices,[13] especially of large executive homes, in Weston village and other villages around the town of Ross tend to be at the top of the range compared with properties in Ross-On-Wye that offer

[12] Local Property Gazetteer (April 2011)

[13] Based on 2014 data from the Land Registry and commercial estate agents

similar levels of accommodation, whereas for terraced and small semis the prices are similar to Ross. There have been approximate 100 property sales since the year 2000, categorised as follows:

- Larger and individually designed properties accounting for more than 60%,
- Small houses (2-bedrooms) just over 30% and
- Family homes (3-bedrooms) less than 10%.

The community has indicated[14] that it considers the building of new houses is necessary to meet the needs through to 2031 and to sustain the long term well-being of Weston village.

Opinions have been expressed that the parish needs more young families to create a better age balance, which in turn would require more homes that are affordable.

When asked what type of housing was needed in the parish, family homes, starter homes, adapted/easy access homes and homes for local people were selected as most needed. Such homes would address the needs of those seeking to downsize and those wishing to start a home in the area where typically they previously lived with their parents.

Most residents would prefer to have limited housing development with the priority given to small sites of three to five houses or six to ten houses on brownfield sites and infilling within the present settlement boundary. In the absence of sufficient suitable land within the present settlement boundary, building needs to be considered on suitable adjacent land.

The strong response to the residents' questionnaires provided a representative view of the community with respect to housing matters, covering the number, sort, type, style and location. Each of these categories is described in more detail in the following sections.

5.2 Housing Numbers

The draft HC Core Strategy for 2011 to 2031 requires a minimum housing growth target of 14% for the Housing Market Area (HMA) of Ross on Wye, which encompasses the parish of Weston under Penyard. As an action arising from the Examination of the HC Core Strategy in February 2015, Herefordshire Council (HC) revised the method of calculation used to determine the actual numbers of dwellings required in the rural areas. On 17th April 2015 HC provided specific advice on housing numbers for Weston under Penyard in the table reproduced below:

Parish/ Group	Settlements in fig 4.20 and 4.21	Number of households in parish	% growth in Local Plan Core Strategy	Number of new houses required to 2031	Housing Completions 2011 – 2014	Housing commitments as at 1 April 2014	Total housing remaining
Weston under Penyard	Weston under Penyard; Pontshill	465	14	65	2	8	55

Accompanying Notes:

- The baseline year of the Core Strategy is April 2011 and this is the date which has been used to calculate proportional growth figures. These statistics are based on the Local Property Gazetteer (April 2011). This calculation accurately reflects parish boundaries.
- Commitments (planning permissions granted) and houses which have been built between April 2011 and March 2014 have also been provided in the table above. You will see that this amount has been discounted from the revised indicative target.

[14] 2014 Residents' Questionnaire Survey. See the Weston under Penyard neighbourhood planning website www.weston-under-penyard.co.uk

Therefore the total minimum number of houses that must be delivered between April 2015 and 2031 is 55 houses. Windfall development includes non-allocated development that may come forward both within and outside settlement boundaries.

It should be noted that in order to become a formalised element of the HC Local Plan, this Plan is required to demonstrate that the housing numbers can be delivered in the timescales described above, as prescribed by the HC Core Strategy.

Policy H1: Number of New Houses

A minimum of 55 dwellings in the parish should be delivered in the period of April 2015 – 31st March 2031.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy sets out the basis for housing development over the plan period that is considered the most appropriate given the level of need, compliance with the HC Core Strategy Policy RA1 including Weston on Penyard HMA 14% growth requirement, site considerations and the aim to achieve an improved population structure
2. 55 houses is the net requirement after 10 commitments have been taken into account for the period 2011 to April 2015.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

A large majority of residents did not wish to see major new housing developments in the parish because they feel that this would inevitably lead to a significant change in the character of the Weston village. As described in the Residents' Survey Report respondents stated their views on the number of houses to be permitted, with 59% of respondents saying that the total to be built during the period to 2031 should not exceed 30.

For the first five year period 31% of respondents said the numbers should not exceed ten houses and 32% said the numbers should not exceed 20 houses. By inference a majority of 63% wanted no more than 20 houses in the first five years.

5.3 Areas Considered for New Development

HC Core Strategy Requirements

In accordance with Policy RA1 of the HC Core Strategy residential development will be located within or adjacent to the main built up area(s) of the settlements. This will ensure that unnecessary isolated, non-characteristic and discordant dwellings do not arise which would adversely affect the character and setting of a settlement and its local environment.

In the case of Weston under Penyard the two "settlements" considered in Policy RA1 of the HC Core Strategy are Pontshill and the core village of Weston itself. Most of Bromsash is within the neighbouring parish of Linton.

Weston Village

Weston village is expected to be the main focus for housing development because it is the largest centre of population and provides the community amenities and local services.

Land put forward as available within the Weston village settlement boundary is subject to serious planning constraints and is insufficient to meet the proposed level of development. Other land was put forward by owners on the outside edges of the settlement boundary and it was necessary to consider development in these locations with an extension to the settlement boundary.

Pontshill

In the residents' questionnaire survey only eight residents identified Pontshill for housing development. Pontshill was also a location where sixteen residents stated that additional houses should not be built

In addition to the apparent lack of demand, concerns were expressed about the suitability of Pontshill for further development, including:

- Safety concerns regarding the relatively narrow access roads to Pontshill and the heavy vehicles that use these narrow roads.
- No pedestrian footways
- No public transport
- Limited access to main drainage

At Pontshill only one potential site, adjacent to Lane End House, was put forward for consideration but was not selected for inclusion in this Plan because:

- The site was proposed by the owner on the basis a small development for not more than five to six houses on the site,
- The results of the 2014 Questionnaire survey indicated that there was little support for new housing in Pontshill,
- Weston village has much better infrastructure, facilities and services than Pontshill for new housing development and
- Current planning applications at Weston village, if approved, would already provide more than enough additional housing for the parish for the full period of this Plan though to 2031.

Bromsash

Bromsash lies mostly within the parish of Linton. The relatively small part of Bromsash that lies within the parish of Weston comprises 15 houses in a single depth development mainly along the B4224 and bordered to the west by agricultural land.

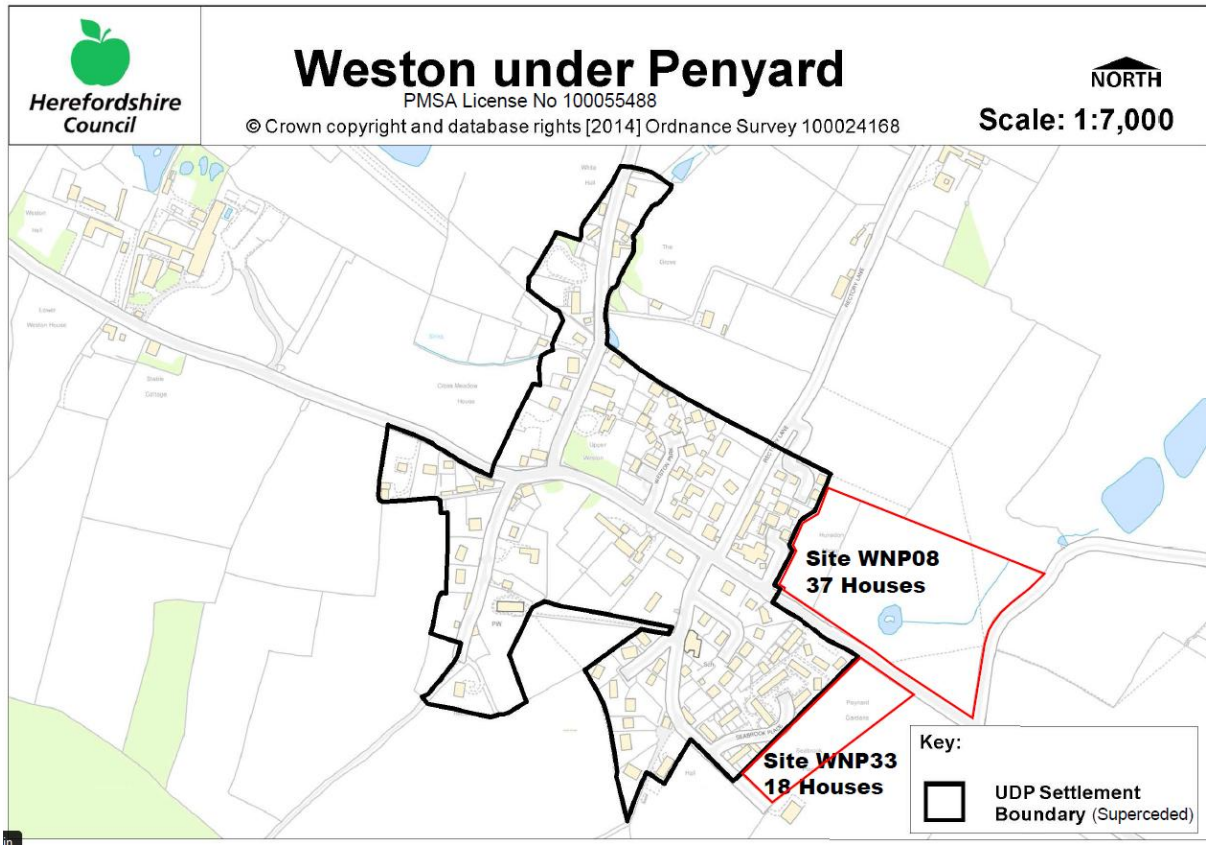
In the residents' survey no residents identified Bromsash for housing development. Residents have expressed serious concerns with traffic speed and access onto the B4224.

In Bromsash, one small site at Highfield Farm was put forward which would not have a major effect on meeting parish housing requirements and is distant from community facilities which are located in other villages. Furthermore, since most of the village of Bromsash is in the parish of Linton, it was decided to defer consideration of the site until an overall plan for any development of the Bromsash village could be discussed and agreed with Linton Parish Council

5.4 Selected Sites for Housing Development

Under this Plan, two housing development sites are approved for the allocation of a minimum of 55 dwellings. This was the development option clearly supported in the representations received during the Regulation 14 consultation phase. These sites WNP08 and WNP33 are shown in the following map.

Map 5.4 Selected Sites



Up to 37 houses will be permitted on site WNP08 and up to 18 houses on site WNP33, totalling 55 houses

The key advantages in the use of these two sites are:

1. The sites were ranked first and second in the Sites Assessment Study carried out by an independent Planning Consultant;
2. In the Residents Survey 2014 these two sites were the preferred sites,
3. In terms of availability both sites provide a robust solution for the Plan since they had recently been submitted for outline planning application by their owners.
4. The sites are both located on the eastern side of Weston village, thereby providing an ideal opportunity for the parish and Herefordshire Council to create a combined development plan, including in particular:
    - Landscaping to improve the visual character and appearance of the eastern aspect of the village,
    - Sympathetic environmental improvements
    - Housing designs so that the two sites complement each other,
    - Highway improvements to serve both sites including safe vehicular access to and from the A40, combined with measures to promote speed limit compliance within the restricted areas. The expansion of the village to the east will require an extension of the 30mph zone and since this is currently only some 600m distance

from the 40mph limit at Ryeford, consideration should be given to the introduction of a reduced speed limit over this short length of road,

- Consideration of a new access road through site 33 to the school, village hall and recreation ground,
- Improvements in the safety of pedestrians by the provision of new facilities for crossing the A40 and new footways/cycleways on the A40,
- The linking of pedestrian/cycle routes through the sites
- The creation of public open spaces adequate for both developments,
- A combined approach with economies of scale for the enhancement of the infrastructure including water supply, sewerage, power supply, gas supply and fibre optic broadband.

Site WNP33 – Looking SW from the A40

Site WNP08 – Looking North from A40

5.5 Policies for Housing Development Sites

The policies that follow apply specifically to each of the two allocated sites. These policies respond to the particular characteristics or sensitivities of each development site.

Policy HS1 Land East of Penyard Garden, SW of A40

Site Reference	**WNP33**
Area to be developed	**1.3 ha**
Approximate number of dwellings	**18**
Affordable homes	**40%**

Site WNP33 is allocated for approximately 18 dwellings subject to the proposed development conforming to all policies contained in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan, the HC Core Strategy and the following site specific requirements:

a) The opportunity must be taken in the housing design and the site design to significantly enhance the setting of both the entrance to Weston village and views across to the Parish Church and The Penyard by screening the effect of the existing buildings of Penyard Gardens and Seabrook Place. This must be complemented by appropriate green spaces, hedgerows and large trees;

b) Housing design should comply with the policies of this Plan but should, where possible, be complementary with the design of the nearby development on site WNP08;

c) A combined footway/cycleway link should be provided from the A40 at the NE side of the development to the existing adopted highways at the SW side of the development;

d) Adequate public green space and play areas to a stated recognised standard of provision must be provided;

e) Every possible opportunity should be taken to enhance the safety of all users of the A40 road and footways to the satisfaction of Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council. Particular regard should be paid to vehicular access, traffic calming facilities and pedestrian and cycling crossing improvements. These improvements should be designed and constructed in a manner that is complementary with the nearby development on site WNP08;

f) Any proposal for development of this site will require a full archaeological investigation. In the event of significant and / or extensive remains are found they should be preserved in-situ in accordance with paragraph 135 of the NPPF;

g) Consideration of a new access road through site 33 to the school, village hall and recreation ground; and

h) Developers should ensure that the phasing of construction works should minimise the effect on the amenity or visual intrusion of residents of properties located nearby and those new residents nearby within their development. In this regard any planning application should be supported by evidence of current demand for the type and number of houses proposed and accompanied by a working method statement showing how development should be brought forward in phases to minimise any adverse effects.

Supporting Statements

1. The policy addresses the positive benefits of the specific development which have formed an integral part of the site selection process, including advice provided by Herefordshire Council's Archaeology Service in relation to the potential for archaeological remains to be present on site given the proximity of the settlement to Ariconium.
2. The policy requires the developer's design proposal to take full account of the other selected potential development site WPN08, situated nearby.
3. Developer should be aware of demand in order that a site does not remain in a state of 'under construction' for a significant period of time whereby residents nearby and living in early phases of the development are continually suffering effects on their amenity from the unfinished condition of a site or a lengthy period over which building works take place.

Policy HS2 Land East of Hunsdon Manor, NE of the A40

Site Reference	**WNP08**
Area to be developed	**4.09 ha**
Approximate number of dwellings	**37**
Affordable homes	**40%**

Site WNP08 is allocated for approximately 37 dwellings within the Settlement Boundary defined in Policy H2 subject to the proposed development conforming to all policies contained in the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan, the HC Core Strategy and the following site specific requirements:

a) The opportunity must be taken in the housing design and the site design to significantly enhance the setting of the entrance to Weston village. This must be complemented by appropriate green spaces and by retaining and reinforcing hedgerows and increasing the number of trees on site;
b) Housing design should comply with the policies of this Plan but should, where possible, be complementary with the design of the nearby development on site WNP33;
c) Provision should be made for pedestrian and cycle access at the NE side of the site to allow for the potential development of a combined footway/cycleway on the route of the disused railway;
d) The existing pond should be retained as an amenity feature within the new development. Adequate play areas and public green space to a stated recognised standard of provision should be provided as a feature at the centre of the site around the existing pond;
e) Every possible opportunity should be taken to enhance the safety of all users of the A40 road and footways to the satisfaction of Herefordshire Council and the Parish Council. Particular regard should be paid to vehicular access, traffic calming facilities and pedestrian and cycling crossing improvements. These improvements should be designed and constructed in a manner that is complementary with the nearby development on site WNP33;
f) Any proposal for development of this site will require a full archaeological investigation. In the event of significant and extensive remains being found they should be preserved in-situ in accordance with paragraph 135 of the NPPF and the land surrounding the remains will be considered at a future review stage of the Plan for designation as Local Green Space in accordance with Policy SE3;
g) The horse trough on the A40, referred to in Appendix A, (D) 5, should be protected and the site enhanced if possible;
h) Developers should ensure that the phasing of construction works should minimise the effect on the amenity or visual intrusion of residents of properties located nearby and those new residents nearby within their development. In this regard any planning application should be supported by evidence of current demand for the type and number of houses proposed and accompanied by a working method statement showing how development should be brought forward in phases to minimise any adverse effects; and
i) Any application for development of this site must demonstrate that flood risk to the site or downstream of the site arising from watercourses and ponds on the site is not increased by the development. All flood risk tests and assessments required by the local planning authority must be completed prior to planning approval and any associated flood mitigation works will be completed in accordance with the requirements of the local planning authority.

Supporting Statements

1. The policy addresses the positive benefits of the specific development which have formed an integral part of the site selection process, including advice provided by Herefordshire Council's Archaeology Service in relation to the potential for archaeological remains to be present on site given the proximity of the settlement to Ariconium.
2. The policy requires the developer's design proposal to take full account of the other selected potential development WNP33, situated nearby.
3. The area is known to have a moderate potential for the presence of Roman and Medieval remains.
4. Although the site has a recorded area of 4.09ha a substantial proportion of the site is not available for building due to the presence of significant and important Roman archaeological remains.
5. Developer should be aware of demand in order that a site does not remain in a state of 'under construction' for a significant period of time whereby residents nearby and living in early phases of the development are continually suffering effects on their amenity from the unfinished condition of a site or a lengthy period over which building works take place.

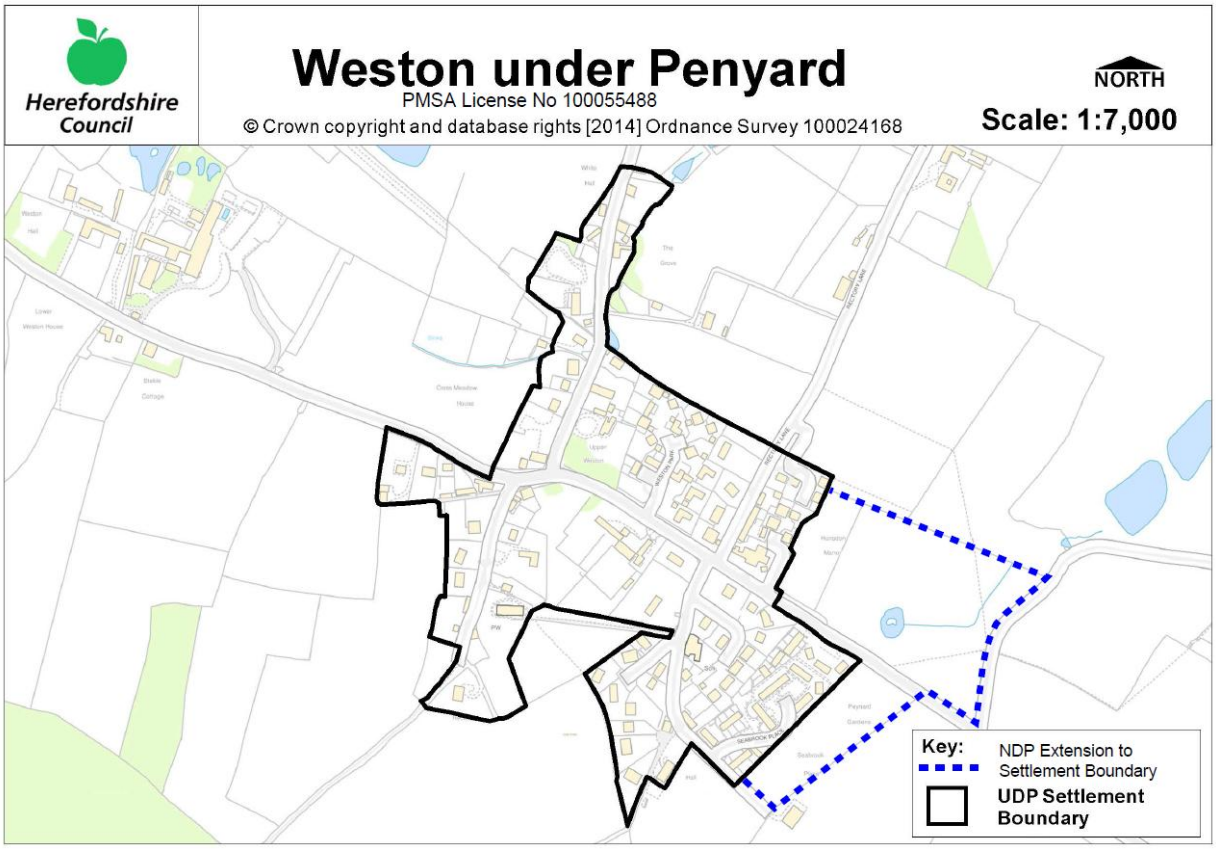
5.6 Policy for Location of New Developments

Policy H2: Location of New Developments

For well-designed proposals that meet all relevant requirements set out in other policies in this plan the approach to the location of residential development will be based upon the following:

a) Development will be permitted at the locations defined in Policies HS1 and HS2;
b) To allow for appropriate growth in Weston village an extended Settlement Boundary is defined as shown on the Policy Map H2;
c) Applications will be supported for small residential developments on infill gaps and on redevelopment sites within the Weston village Settlement Boundary;
d) With the exception of the conditions described in sub-items (e), (f), (g), (h), (i) and (j), new build residential development will not be permitted outside the Weston village Settlement Boundary;
e) Applications will be supported for small residential developments in gaps between existing dwellings within frontages at Pontshill and Bromsash (that part within Weston under Penyard Parish) where the infill gap is no more than 30 metre frontage;
f) Applications will be supported for small residential developments within or immediately adjacent to existing buildings comprising the settlements of Pontshill and Bromsash (that part within Weston under Penyard Parish);
g) Applications will be supported for the erection of a rural worker's dwelling house where there is a demonstrated essential functional need and the enterprise is proven to be financially sustainable;
h) Applications will be supported for the conversion of a building of architectural and / or historic merit where that building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without complete or substantial rebuilding;
i) Applications will be supported for the replacement of an existing single dwelling house with a single new dwelling house of a similar scale**;** and
j) Development outside the existing village and settlements, particularly for housing relating to business and agriculture, should be considered within the limitations set out in HC Core Strategy and particularly Policy RA3 covering residential development.

Policy Map H2- Extension of Settlement Boundary



Supporting Statement

1. Weston village has been selected as the location for development under this plan since the sites considered are ranked highly in the sites assessment. It is also the most appropriate location for development since it contains all the community facilities and provides direct access to the A40 for private and public transport.
2. There are only a few small potentially deliverable plots for development within the Settlement Boundary[15] and so consideration must be given to some development just outside but adjacent to the boundary.

[15] Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)
Weston village has an existing Settlement Boundary, created as part of the earlier Parish Plan 2006. In the 2014 Questionnaire Survey 81% of those residents who expressed an opinion said that the Settlement Boundary should be retained. When asked about the option to allow amendment to the Settlement Boundary, 57% found this acceptable.

In consideration of the Settlement Boundary and the best location for new homes, there was support for the following two options:

- 49% supported development inside the present Settlement Boundary of Weston village and
- 63% also supported building adjacent to the edge of the present Settlement Boundary

Only 11% were in favour of the third option of building at other locations away from the Weston Settlement Boundary.

More than 300 free text comments were received suggesting specific locations for new housing, including in particular:

- North of A40 adjacent to Hunsdon Manor and
- South of A40 adjacent to Penyard Gardens and
- North of A40 between Penyard House and the Weston Cross public house

Over three quarters of the community preferred new homes to be created by conversion of redundant buildings or by the development of brownfield sites. Less than one quarter favoured building on greenfield land. However, the most popular sites were identified as greenfield sites either side of the A40 to the east of Weston village and both lying adjacent to but outside the present Settlement Boundary.

5.7 Housing Mix and Tenancy

Policy H3: Housing Mix and Tenancy

Proposals for development on sites of 11 new dwellings or more, or 1-10 new dwellings with a total gross floorspace of more than 1,000 sq m, should demonstrate they meet local housing needs and should provide a tenure mix of 40% of Affordable Homes unless viability considerations can be shown to necessitate an alternative percentage of provision.

Supporting Statements

1. Residents have expressed a need for affordable homes but the actual demand should be taken into account when a planning application is under consideration.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)
68% of respondents considered that the new homes to be built should be sold at market prices.
There was approximately equal support of around 40%, for:

- Self-build homes,
- Homes with shared ownership and
- Homes with live-work potential.
- There was less support, below (30%), for:
- Homes for registered housing providers let and
- Sheltered homes to buy.

Cont'd
The 2014 Residents' Survey confirmed a need for an increase in housing, including some affordable housing.

In addition to the residents' questionnaire an additional more specific questionnaire was issued to all households concerning indicative housing needs. This questionnaire sought an indication of the number of houses required to meet the current need and the needs anticipated within the next five years. 36 residents completed the housing needs questionnaire, less than 10% of those delivered. Nevertheless, the findings clearly indicated a demand for low cost homes to meet the current needs and also a similar demand, to meet housing needs expected within the next five years.

5.8 Type of Homes

Policy H4: Type of Housing

This policy directs that development applications should favour the following types of homes:

a) Family homes (three bedrooms or more) and
b) Starter homes (two bedrooms) and
c) Adapted/easy access homes e.g. bungalows and
d) Homes for local people

Supporting Statements

1. This policy seeks to address the needs of those seeking to downsize and those wishing to start a home in the area where typically they previously lived with their parents.
2. "Local People" are defined in Policy H7

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

The community has identified a need for new housing to meet a broad range of requirements.

When asked what type of housing should be built, the options most strongly supported were:

- Family homes (3-bedroom),
- Starter homes (2-bedroom),
- Homes for local people and people with local connections
- Adapted/easy access homes

There was a lesser support for the following categories:

- Supported/retirement homes
- Living/working homes
- Executive homes and
- Apartments

5.9 Affordable Housing

Background

Recent developments in and around the area of Ross-On-Wye provide an indication of the type and style of housing that is currently being offered. The most recent developments in Weston village have been undertaken by private developers and have provided:

- Executive housing only or
- A mix of executive housing and affordable housing or
- A mix of executive housing with farm buildings converted into small family homes.

In the second category the development of Weston Park in Weston village includes seven affordable homes, constructed in 2006/7, as an integral part of a development of 19 red brick faced homes. The affordable homes are arranged on two sides of a courtyard as two terraces, one comprising 2-bedroom houses and one 3-bedroom house and the other having three 2-bedroom houses and one 3-bedroom house. These houses, although smaller, are similar in style and appearance to the executive houses.

In the third category a later development in Weston village, known as Hunsdon Manor Gardens, was also carried out by a private developer and comprises converted stone buildings to provide small family accommodation and new executive style houses that use some local stone as a feature.

Policy H5:	**Provision of Affordable Housing** The exact balance of affordable housing provision, including intermediate housing, will be determined according to evidence available at the time of any planning application, regarding current and future housing needs in the parish.

Supporting Statements

1. If the parish is to thrive, the balance of age has to be redressed and the working age population has to grow again.
2. Consultation has shown that residents want a range of housing which, whilst suiting the needs of an ageing population, also caters for the needs of first young first-time buyers and families.
3. Consultation has also shown a marked preference for increasing provision of affordable homes, particularly low-cost market and shared ownership housing stock to provide homes that enable families to get on the housing ladder.
4. Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes is a necessary part of growing sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities. In Weston under Penyard a well-balanced population is essential for the ongoing viability of local services and the prosperity of the parish.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)
In the residents' survey family and starter homes were identified as the type of homes most needed now and during the next five years. Of these, the preference was for homes at market prices followed by shared ownership (part rent/part buy) and finally, with relatively low support, homes let by a registered housing provider. However, in the indicative housing needs survey there was significant support for affordable housing.

5.10 Rural Exception Sites for Affordable Housing

Background

Small rural exception sites may be used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing.

The draft HC Core Strategy provides for rural exception sites for affordable housing where the development meets an identified need. Subject to proven local need, a limited amount of affordable housing could be provided within the parish on small rural exception sites where proposals for housing would not normally be permitted

Policy H6:	**Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Site** Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites where housing would not normally be permitted by other policies, and submitted in accordance with Policy H2 of the HC Core Strategy, will be supported, particularly if they can demonstrate the redevelopment of brownfield land.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have existing family or employment connection.

5.11 Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People

Preference will be given to people with local connections when allocating affordable homes

Policy H7: Allocation of Affordable Homes for Local People

All new affordable housing in Weston Under Penyard parish created under the provisions of this plan will be for people who have housing needs which are not met by the open housing market, subject to the following local connections conditions:

a) The dwelling will be for occupation as the sole residence of a person or persons, one of whom has a local connection to the parish of Weston Under Penyard, or
b) In the event of there being no person having a local connection to the parish of Weston Under Penyard, a person with a local connection to one of the Herefordshire parishes immediately adjoining that parish, or
c) In the event of there being no person with a local connection to the parish of Weston under Penyard, referred to in sub-clauses a).and b) above, any other person who has a local connection to the County of Herefordshire.
d) For the purposes of sub-clauses a), b) or c) of this schedule 'local connection' is as defined by the housing allocation policies of Herefordshire Council.

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to satisfy locally identified needs for all life stages, and including affordable homes

Section 6: Design Policies

6.1 Design Appearance

Background

The parish of Weston under Penyard lies to the east of Ross-on-Wye under the wooded slopes of Penyard hill. The scattered small villages are surrounded by farmland and rolling countryside with distant views to the Black Mountains, May Hill and the Forest of Dean. The A40 runs through Ryeford and Weston village on its way to the Wye valley, an area of outstanding natural beauty, the Brecon Beacons National Park and other popular destinations.

Weston and Pontshill are old villages, recorded in the Domesday Book. The manor of Weston under Penyard dates from the time of the Conquest, several buildings have their origins in the mediaeval period and many houses, cottages and barns date from the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For over eight hundred years a church has stood on the site of the Parish Church of St Lawrence. In total there are 30 Listed Buildings within the parish.

As well as the church, numerous houses and other structures are included in the official list of buildings of special architectural and historical interest. These and other old stone buildings, such as the Weston Cross Inn and the village school from the nineteenth century, dominate Weston village in particular. All the villages are small in this sparsely populated rural parish and, until more recently, modern housing has not intruded much on their traditional appearance.

The older properties typically used sandstone ashlar (finely dressed square masonry), stone or slate roof tiles and rendering. These local materials reflected the style of south Herefordshire construction over the years.

Most developments over the past twenty-five years have been built of brick, block and render, timber facing or tile cladding with tiled roofs. They have not followed the traditional designs used in south Herefordshire. They are more typical of suburban housing estates. They are out of character with the long-established appearance of the villages in the parish. Only a few exceptions amongst the new properties have local stone as facing or as a feature.

Policy D1: Design Appearance

Proposals for all forms of new development should offer a design that seeks to reflect local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in South Herefordshire.

Development proposals should contain design measures which, in addition to regulatory requirements, will:

a) Be sympathetic to the existing traditional character of the parish, utilising a mixture of materials and architectural styles and incorporate locally distinctive features, for example, the use of local stone;
b) Ensure that the design and use of materials is such that affordable homes are visually indistinguishable from market housing;
c) Respect the scale, density and character of existing properties in the parish;
d) Provide buildings that relate well to established building heights and bulks. A building height of no more than 2 storeys should normally be used. House designs with three storeys (or "2½" storeys) may be approved subject to location and high class architectural design and choice of materials;
e) Allow for two-storey terraced housing in appropriate locations with the retention of open space on site for soft landscaping and amenity space;
f) Not detract from the amenity of adjacent existing properties;
g) Preserve existing trees, boundary hedges, ponds, orchards and hedgerows and make provision for tree planting with types already found within the parish; and
h) Be set back from the road and well screened by mature trees/shrubs landscaping to maintain a soft edge to the Weston village and blend with the existing landscape.

Supporting Statements

1. The character of the parish and its natural environment is important to residents. Criteria for development are an essential to prevent further damage to our parish.
2. Compromising the appearance of characterful settlements is offensive to residents and is also damaging to tourism and its associated businesses which provide employment in the area.
3. Buildings taller than 2 storeys with poor architectural design are unlikely to be in keeping with the local character and are more likely to have negative effects on the landscape.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

The 2014 residents' survey asked for opinions on the following three features:

- Building design that respects the scale and style of existing buildings (99% were in favour)
- The use of traditional local building materials (98% were in favour)
- Modern building styles and materials (62% were against)

6.2 Technical Design

Policy D2: Technical Design

All proposals for new development should demonstrate compliance with the policies in the HC Core Strategy. Designs should respect the connections between people and places.

The proposal should:

a) Provide safe and convenient vehicular access to and from any public road;
b) Provide adequate off-street parking, taking into account local car ownership levels, the availability of public transport and the site-specific circumstances;
c) Encourage the utilisation of physical sustainability measures associated with buildings that include, in particular, orientation of buildings, the provision of energy and water conservation measures, cycle storage, recycling storage, renewable energy infrastructure and telecommunications;
d) Include the installation of sustainable drainage systems, and maximum use of permeable surfaces;
e) Integrate the new homes into the existing neighbourhood and support a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment;
f) Provide access to local facilities and public transport links via convenient direct paths suitable for those pushing a pushchair, in a wheelchair, walking with a stick or walking frame or using a mobility scooter;
g) Where there is good reason to believe that contamination of land may exist on any site, including through agricultural processes, undertake an assessment to establish the extent and nature of the contamination and effective measures to ensure potential occupiers, and the wider environment, are not put at unacceptable risk; and
h) Ensure occupants of any new dwellings do not experience significant noise disturbance or inappropriate levels of air pollution arising from traffic on the adjacent highway.

Supporting Statements

1. It has been noted that the housing developments that have taken place over recent years have not always achieved the visual result that the community would have liked to have seen and have not provided the necessary infrastructure to support those developments.
2. Residents living in the parish depend heavily on motorcars for transport. While it is essential to move towards the use of other forms of transport, in rural areas like Weston under Penyard where public transport services are poor, cars are still a necessity. Ownership levels are expected to remain high in the future. The NPPF Guidance Note 39 requires that local car ownership levels should be taken into account when setting local parking standards for residential developments.
3. There is a need for careful provision of adequate resident and visitor parking and for pavements in new developments, in order to ensure the safety of all groups of residents.
4. The community would expect a robust application of the above policies in respect of all future developments in the parish.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

The 2014 residents' survey asked for opinions on the importance of six listed house features. The three most important were:

1. Off-street parking (95% in favour),
2. High levels of energy conservation in new buildings (95% in favour),
3. Minimum standards for living space (79% in favour),

Residents have commonly cited a need for adequate external space for each new property and for good accessibility.

Section 7: Sustainable Development

7.1 Introduction

Sustainable development can be defined as enabling growth that caters for the needs of current generation, whilst ensuring that growth does not mean worse lives for future generations. The purpose of this Neighbourhood Plan is to create social, economic and environmental progress in a sustainable manner.

7.2 Sustainability for the Community

Background

Residents of Weston under Penyard feel that it is a good place to live. They appreciate the special qualities of the parish and have identified several features that they wish to preserve and enhance. To many it offers a place in the country with a good measure of country living and yet close enough to the town of Ross-On-Wye and the M50 motorway with access to the Midlands and the South West and the network of main roads heading towards Hereford, Ledbury, Gloucester and Cheltenham, Monmouth and South Wales.

The parish has an aging population and it is felt necessary to move towards a more balanced population. It will be necessary during the period of the Neighbourhood Plan to work with residents, landowners and developers to create homes that families can afford to buy, employment where they can work and an environment for living, whilst protecting the quality of life that residents value.

Agriculture is the main business within the parish and is the main employer, but for horticulture does rely heavily upon migrant labour. Most residents work outside the parish. A number of small businesses have been established within the parish that, in the main, operate from converted farm buildings and from residences. The business community within the parish is small and feels that it has a low level of support from the community at large. The proximity of Ross-On-Wye with its industrial parks is seen by many as the best place for new businesses to be established. Nevertheless, the desirability of creating opportunities for employment to support the sustainable development of the parish is accepted and embraced.

7.3 Sustaining Community Facilities

Background

With increasing individual mobility the viability of many rural services has declined significantly over the past 50 years. Many local residents have increasingly used the expanded retail services in Ross on Wye and today there is no shop in the parish However the parish community still has access to five facilities, all centred within the Weston village . They comprise:

- A village hall, with kitchen and changing rooms
- Recreation ground/playing fields/play area adjacent to the village hall
- A primary school with a capacity for 70 children
- A village pub, the Weston Cross Inn
- The Church of St Lawrence

To promote the ongoing prosperity of the parish it is essential that Weston under Penyard retains and provides local services that will sustain the vitality of the community. The community also recognises that providing housing to meet current local needs and to attract an acceptable inflow of future residents would be beneficial in sustaining the parish and its facilities.

Policy SD1: Community facilities

Support will be given to well-designed development that enhances and increases community facilities, recreation and local services within Weston village.

Support will also be given to well-designed development proposals for a new village school in Weston Under Penyard, should this be required by the relevant education authorities during the life of the plan. Because of the importance of maintaining a school within the parish for local children, an appropriate level of policy 'weight' will be given by the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority in decisions relating to site selection for a new school.

The provision of other community facilities within any new school building is also supported, subject to the remaining sections of this policy.

The retention and creation of new or additional services and facilities will be supported where possible through enabling developments that would enhance their viability. All such proposals should ensure that:

a) They meet a need identified by the community concerned or by a body with statutory responsibility for a particular service;
b) They do not create unacceptable noise, fumes, smell or other disturbance to neighbouring residential properties;
c) They do not cause traffic congestion, adverse traffic impact upon local amenity or adverse impact on traffic flow on local roads; and
d) Access and off-street parking can be satisfactorily provided without harming existing residential and other uses.

Proposals that could result in loss of or harm to an Asset of Community Value, as listed in Appendix A, will only be supported where it is clearly demonstrated they are no longer fit for purpose or viable, or that an equivalent alternative facility is available within the Parish.

In order to support the proposed level of growth and contribute towards maintaining a resilient and balanced community, developers should contribute towards enhancing these community facilities and other facilities considered necessary as the result of the expansion of the village subject to viability considerations as set out in paragraph 173 of the Framework.

Supporting Statements

1. There is a need for appropriate improvements to the physical condition of existing local facilities in order to make them fit for a growing population, encouraging funding where appropriate.
2. Different funding arrangements will need to be investigated, depending on the purpose of the service or facility, including grant funding, developer contribution, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), partnerships, investors and Herefordshire Council.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

The questionnaire survey asked residents to state their opinion on the importance of these five facilities.

- 70% or more of residents said that all of these were *very important*.
- 90% or more of residents said that all of these were *very important* or *fairly important*

7.4 Sustaining the Village Primary School

Background

In terms of sustainability, the village primary school is considered to be the most important of all the five facilities listed above. Following consultation with governors and staff of the village school it is considered that, given the increasing population arising from further housing development and the physical constraints on the existing school site, there could be some consideration of the school's needs in future. Although the school had 42 pupils in October 2014 and can accommodate a maximum of 70, the school not only serves the communities within the parish, but also takes children from areas outside. It is considered that this would continue or increase in the foreseeable future as housing development increases in neighbouring parishes, particularly in the eastern areas of Ross on Wye, adjacent to Weston parish. Therefore, in the future the school may experience pupil admittance demand which is consistently in excess of the school's maximum 70 places.

The school has been located on its current site for over 150 years. The original building has single storey extensions to the rear and has a playground and a play area with dedicated equipment. The school has no further room for expansion as it is physically constrained on all sides. There is no dedicated onsite parking and congestion in School Lane at pick up and drop off times can pose a road safety issue, particularly for those making their way to the school on foot. Playing field facilities are available next to the village hall but road safety considerations place restrictions on their use due to the narrowness of the School Lane access road.

Potential under capacity of the school could be addressed in a number of ways. For example, by controlling numbers through admission policy changes or moving the school to another site with facilities capable of accommodating the increased numbers.

Both the Head and governors are cognisant of the fact that, in the next few years, the school may have outgrown its present building and, at that point, the Local Authority and Diocese might wish to expand into a larger building with better parking/drop-off area, playground, number of classrooms and overall facilities.

Although this situation has not yet been reached the pupil registrations for September 2015 are seen as large in percentage terms. At this stage it is unknown how quickly the pupil numbers will increase, nor if the present year's registration numbers will continue. At the time of drafting this plan Herefordshire Council is currently undertaking a strategic review of educational assets and this will feed into the potential for new school provision in the parish. It is likely that any proposal for a new school in the parish would be received favourably by the Parish Council and is supported by Policy SD1. However, the building of a new school is a complex business and if the need for a new school is identified, the Local Authority and Diocese will bring forward plans for school provision so that the Parish Council can consider a possible new site at that time.

Section 8: Sustainable Transport Policies

8.1 Introduction

The A40 road runs from east to west through the approximate middle of the parish, bisecting Weston village and the settlement at Ryeford. To the south of the A40 lies Pontshill, Bill Mills and Bailey Lane End and to the north lie several settlements including Bromsash, Bollitree, Kingstone and Dairy Cottages. The network of roads within the parish, with the exception of the A40 and B4224, are minor C roads and lanes that serve the settlements and farms and as such have to accommodate vehicles of all sizes.

Policy ST1: Accommodating Traffic within the Parish

Measures will be promoted, in association with Herefordshire Council, to reduce the impact of traffic upon amenity and to address community concerns. The impact of development proposals on the existing environment should be comprehensibly reviewed to ensure that they are sustainable in terms of infrastructure, road safety and the standards required for a peaceful and safe rural parish.

Development proposals should ensure that:

a) There will be safe access onto the adjacent roads and adequate off street parking for residents and visitors;
b) Development in the parish does not create a significant increase in the volume of traffic on roads that do not have sufficient safe capacity;
c) Residential and environmental amenity is not adversely affected by traffic;
d) New and improved footpaths and cycleways are provided, not just within new developments but subject to viability with appropriate extensions to create safe pedestrian and cycle routes to the key locations in the parish;
e) Roads in new developments should be wide enough to allow vehicles (especially emergency vehicles) to pass each other without either using the pavements;
f) New development is designed to not have adverse effect and subject to viability have positive benefits for the storm-water drainage systems in the adjoining roads; and
g) Cycleways are promoted as a preferred transport method, seeking to provide a safe cycling link with other parts of the parish and with Ross on Wye.

Supporting Statements

1. Road traffic is a matter that greatly concerns most residents. Whilst road safety and the improvement of roads, footways and cycleways is not a matter for policy in this Plan, all new developments should prioritise any possible transport measures which promote positive sustainable impacts for the benefit of residents.[16]
2. In addition to the above policies traffic speed and other transport related matters will be the subject of a Parish Council initiative, as described in Annex 1.

[16] Department for Communities and Local Government Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport: first published March 2001, updated January 2011

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

The first public event, held in June 2014, to promote the development of the Plan, generated a number of concerns about road safety. As a direct consequence a section on Traffic was included within the 2014 survey of residents. Nearly three quarters of respondents cited traffic speed as a road traffic concern in the parish**,** followed by pedestrian safety (62%) and size of vehicles (54%). Most of the hundreds of comments about traffic volumes, traffic speed, size of vehicles, traffic noise and pedestrian safety related to the A40.

Residents were concerned about traffic speed in many areas of the parish, with 71% of the comments referring to the A40 in general. 39% were about traffic speed in the 30 mph area in Weston and in particular at the eastern end where the A40 is known locally as "the straight". Here vehicles are frequently observed to be travelling at excessive speeds in both directions. The most hazardous location for pedestrians is where School Lane, Rectory Lane and Penyard Gardens meet the A40. . This is especially so for those having to cross the A 40 to access the junior school, church, village hall and playing fields or to use the bus stops. The senior citizens residing in Penyard Gardens and children are the most vulnerable. Another area of concern due to traffic speeds was around the Weston Cross Inn where Church Lane and The Street join the A40 on a double bend with poor line-of-sight visibility, creating a hazard for vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders crossing the A40.

In other areas of the parish, Pontshill, Bromsash and Bailey Lane End were identified as areas where traffic travels too quickly for the road conditions and the safety of others.

In addition to the concerns expressed about traffic speed through the parish, the poor condition of the roads and drains drew almost as much adverse comment.

The state of footpaths and verges caused concern because they became overgrown and restricted the passage for pedestrians and cyclists, often “pushing” the pedestrian closer to the traffic. In some cases overgrown verges have restricted motorists’ visibility and obscured important warning signs.

Traffic volume was identified by 38% of respondents as a concern. Whilst no historical traffic data has been available during the making of this Plan there are concerns in particular that traffic volumes on the A40 continue to increase and that this will be exacerbated by the building of hundreds of homes to the west of the parish at the edge of Ross on Wye and the possibility of further housing in Lea to the east of the parish.

Section 9: Supporting Local Business

9.1 Introduction

Figures from the 2011 census show that a third of parish residents over the age of 16 had degree level qualifications, above the national average, whereas approximately one sixth had no qualifications, below the average for England.

79% of working age residents were employed in 2011. Some residents worked within the parish. However most worked outside the parish. Their largest employment sector was retail followed equally by health/social work and education. These occupations account for over half of the working population.

Many are self-employed and a significant number work from home, although slow broadband speeds and poor mobile phone signal is a concern. Employment within the parish is provided by the farms, the Weston Cross Inn and The Leadership Trust who operate from Penyard House.

Within the parish, agriculture and horticulture is seen as the main business and the biggest employer, but horticulture does rely heavily upon migrant labour. This sector includes combinable crops, root crops, potatoes, vegetables and soft and top fruit, poultry, sheep and cattle. This is indicative of an industry with significant range and vitality and within which development needs to be supported subject to the acceptability of any impacts.

Hospitality is well represented in the form of the Weston Cross Inn, Wharton Lodge and cottages, Upper Weston B&B and Penyard House and Parkfields, both of which offer corporate hospitality, and facilities for special events such as conferences and wedding receptions. Rudhall Manor, a Grade1 listed house dating from the 15th Century, is available for hire for special functions.

The future well-being of the parish requires housing development to meet needs identified by the community and, in so doing, sustain the local school and enhance the local amenities.

9.2 Supporting Local Business

Background

Clearly agriculture, horticulture and related activities is the main business that residents would like to encourage. Tourism/Leisure/Craft, B&B/Holiday Accommodation and Pubs/Restaurants/Cafes were also strongly supported. Taken together these three closely linked sets of activities are seen by the community to offer opportunities for employment and economic growth.

Tourism throughout Herefordshire is worth £469 million to the local economy (2011).[17] Over 4.7 million visitors come to the county for short stays to take advantage of the outstanding countryside, rich heritage and culture. The delivery of services for this industry will be supported where a proposal capitalises on existing assets, develops sustainable walking, cycling or heritage routes, benefits the local community and the economy and is sensitive to the counties natural and built environmental qualities and heritage assets.

[17] Herefordshire Core Strategy

The parish is located close to Ross-On-Wye and the Wye Valley and has an opportunity to become a small additional hub in which to stay and from which to enjoy the many visual attractions within the parish and beyond.
Away from the A40 road the parish is generally served by narrow roads and many residents have commented about safety in respect of heavy traffic using these roads. Improvements to the road network would assist existing businesses and could encourage new ventures to locate in the parish.

Policy SB1: Supporting Local Business

Development proposals, particularly for agriculture and tourism which sustain or increase local business activity, offer employment and appropriate skills training in the parish will be supported provided that:

a) The development can be accommodated within the rural character of the parish;
b) The development does not adversely affect residential and environmental amenity. In terms of environmental amenity, this will include protecting biodiversity, in particular ensuring no significant effects upon any sites designated Special Areas of Conservation; the landscape, the water environment; and the historic environment;
c) The road network, access and parking provisions should be sufficient for any increase in traffic;
d) Small scale, light or general industry, in particular craft-based operations or sustainable technologies are encouraged to locate in suitably converted rural buildings, or on brownfield sites;
e) External storage and paraphernalia should be effectively screened;
f) Noise and light pollution is minimal; and
g) Proposals for home working, would have no adverse effect on residential amenity, including traffic generation, noise or light pollution.

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Supporting Statement

1. Residents would like to encourage the development of existing and new businesses, particularly for agriculture, tourism and their related business opportunities as long as the requirements of Policy SB1 are complied with.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

The Residents' Questionnaire Survey, asked residents to indicate from a list of 12 types of employment which ones should be encouraged locally. The five categories receiving strongest support were:

1. Agriculture related (95%)
2. Tourism, leisure and craft (88%)
3. Community services (84%)
4. B&B/Holiday accommodation (83%)
5. Pubs, restaurants and cafes (75%)

Feedback from the community indicates that there is no desire to see new industrial development which it is considered would best be in nearby Ross-On-Wye. Of the 29 businesses who returned the 2014 Business Questionnaire almost 40% represented the agriculture and hospitality businesses, with the balance covering a wide range of small enterprises.

Local businesses have indicated that they would like the Neighbourhood Plan to support development of employment opportunities within the parish. They have identified the factors which would assist and encourage both growth and the setting up of new ventures. Improved communications, especially faster broadband was highlighted as the most desirable improvement. Changes in government policy, a greater level of recognition by Herefordshire Council and support from the community were listed as desirable.

The availability of space for business was not identified as a high priority although the provision of “business space” to encourage working at home did receive strong support. Indications from the business community were divided about land use for business. Those who considered that no more land should be allocated for business use held the majority view by a small margin. In contrast, there was an overwhelming majority, almost 99%, in favour of using existing buildings and

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brownfield sites. A majority of almost 2:1 were against protecting employment sites from change of use. Most businesses had no plans to change their scale of operation nor the size of their premises.

There was strong support from the business community, over 90% of responders, for the provision of housing that would encourage working from home. This could take the form of integral space, on-site space or workshop on the same site, as provided for by Policy E3 of the HC Core Strategy.

9.3 Work Space Development

Background

Working from home, or in a work space adjacent to home, can promote economic, social and environmental sustainability in terms of:

- Better use of time by reducing travel time
- Lower carbon emissions
- Reduced travel costs
- Opportunities to combine work and family activities

Policy SB2: Work Space Development

In order to deliver sustainable economic growth balanced with population growth the following will be supported:

a) New development that includes linked residential and small scale employment space, including the provision of live/work units, as long as there is no adverse impact on the character of settlements and the amenity of nearby residential areas; and

b) Proposals for home working, where there is no adverse effect on residential amenity, including traffic generation, noise or light pollution.

Supporting Statement

1. Residents would like to encourage the development of existing and new business and employment opportunities within the parish but there is no desire to see new industrial development.
2. There is strong support from the business community for the provision of housing that would encourage working from home.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

In the 2014 residents' survey 68% responded that local planning policies should encourage working from home.

When asked about the type of houses to be built 64% of respondents were in favour of living / working properties (small scale enterprise located within or adjacent to the home).

9.4 Change of Use

Background

In the Residents' survey there was a small majority in favour of protecting existing employment sites from a change of use. However in the Business survey there was a response of 2:1 against the protection of employment sites from change of use.

Policy SB3: Change of use

Proposals for change of use of existing buildings on existing employment sites will be supported, provided that:

a) The re-use will strengthen the local economy or
b) It can be demonstrated that the existing use is no longer economically viable i.e. that the site has been marketed at a reasonable price for at least one year for that, or any other suitable employment or service/trade use away from business use; and
c) The change of use can be achieved in compliance with all other policies in this Neighbourhood Plan

Supporting Statement

1. This policy seeks to ensure that the building stock is retained with appropriate re-use in such a way as to support and strengthen the local economy and in sympathy with the character of the parish.

9.5 Provision of Broadband and Mobile Phone Services

Background

The availability of faster broadband and improved mobile phone coverage in the parish has been recognised as highly desirable by the residents and in particular by the business community.

Herefordshire Council working with its counterparts in Gloucestershire as "Fastershire"[18] has set out to bring faster broadband within the reach of all consumers in the county. During 2014, fibre-optic technology was installed as far as the centre of Weston village to allow parts of the parish to request connection to an improved broadband service

Policy SB4: Provision of Broadband and Mobile Telephone Services

Proposals to enhance the present broadband and mobile telephone equipment infrastructure will be supported through:

a) The introduction of appropriate super-fast broadband and mobile telephone equipment that will provide high quality internet connectivity for business and residential users; and
b) The requirement for new development proposals to include provision for the connection to high speed broadband by means of suitable ducting within the development site, linked to the local/national network.
c) Where proposals are advanced that would involve telephone masts, regard should be had to the transit routes of protected species, in particular bats, thereby ensuring the requirements of Policy SE1 criterion (d).

Supporting Statement

1. To allow local businesses to operate efficiently, access to the best communication systems should be made available.

[18] Fastershire is a partnership between Herefordshire Council, Gloucestershire County Council and BT to build a future proof world class broadband network across Gloucestershire by the end of 2015 and across Herefordshire by the end of 2016.

Section 10: Sustainable Environment Policies

10.1 Sustaining the Parish Environment

Introduction

As the benefits of a sustainable and robust environment becomes more important to everyone, with the effects of climate change becoming more apparent, communities expect their local environment to be maintained to ensure it is conserved, protected and wherever possible enhanced. This can only be achieved by sustainable land use and development.

The rural landscape of the parish has been shaped by agriculture and forestry but through intensive practices these have become a threat to its biodiversity and sustainability. Increasing levels of regulations, compliance and European directives from government are placing greater responsibility on society to safeguard, improve and expand the natural habitats, which over many years have become fragmented, vulnerable and threatened. In turn, these measures are intended to improve biodiversity, water and soil quality and the long term viability of agriculture and forestry as well as communities and rural businesses.

Opportunities to improve biodiversity and reduce irreparable damage being done to the environment should be explored and be conditional on all future development. Future development should be in scale and sympathetic to its surroundings.

Background

Weston under Penyard parish includes two types of landscape, as defined by the Herefordshire Council landscape Character Assessment. These are Principle Settled Farmland and Principle Wooded Hills. These landscapes fall into two distinct regional character areas; Archenfield and Forest of Dean. Strategically placed, the parish lies on the western edge of the Forest of Dean and within the catchment area of the Wye Valley AONB which lies immediately adjacent to the western boundary of the parish.

The undulating nature of the landscape provides numerous points of scenic beauty. From various locations there are magnificent views west across the Wye valley to the Black Mountains in Wales, east to May Hill and southerly over Pontshill towards Lea Bailey, the Forest of Dean and of Penyard Hill. This rich tapestry must be protected and enhanced for everyone to enjoy.

Policy SE1: Sustaining the parish environment and landscape

Measures to preserve and enhance the landscape of the parish's ecological network, the setting and character of settlements will be promoted wherever possible. Development should contribute positively to the area's rural character and not adversely affect it. Wherever possible proposals should:

a) Not adversely affect landscape character but include measures to conserve, restore or enhance the landscape features such as trees, vistas and panoramic views especially primary views into, out of and within the parish including those listed in Appendix B;
b) Maintain and preferably extend tree distribution and cover;
c) Retain important landscape assets of the parish such as ancient trees, orchards, hedgerows and open green spaces;
d) Contribute towards reconnecting and enhancement of the ecological network of the area with measures, in particular, to enhance the biodiversity value of the parish;
e) Ensure that any adverse effects on the European sites can be avoided or mitigated; and
f) Not compromise the ability of the Nutrient Management Plan to deliver the necessary overall nutrient reductions along those stretches of the River Wye SAC which are already exceeding water quality targets, or at risk of doing so.

Supporting Statements.

1. The community is aware of the need to protect and preserve all that contributes to the parish, its villages and settlements.
2. Most members of the community have indicated that they wish to preserve the green spaces, woods, trees and hedgerows

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of the natural environment (e.g. woodlands, wildlife habitats):

- 83% said "Very Important".
- 15% said "Fairly Important"

10.2 Sustaining the Local Character and Heritage

Background

Residents wanted conservation of the many fine historic buildings such as Weston Primary School, Weston Hall, Bollitree Castle, The Old Rectory, Streete House, Rudhall Manor, Hunsdon Manor and the Weston Cross Inn.

There are 30 Listed Buildings throughout the parish including two in the Grade One category.

When asked to nominate any buildings, places or views that should be protected residents, the most commonly cited were

- The Church of St. Lawrence and the Church Field and,
- Penyard Hill and Lea Bailey (views of/from)

The church is a striking landmark throughout the parish and is the focal point from most directions, especially as one approaches Weston village along the A40 from the east or west. The surroundings to the church and nearby buildings includes significant mature ornamental trees which strengthen a sense of place

Policy SE2: Sustaining Local Heritage and Character

Developments will be supported where they conserve or enhance the parish's historic character and local distinctiveness by:

a) Demonstrating that negative impacts to the significance, including impacts to the setting, of heritage assets, including those listed in Appendix A, have been either avoided or minimised. Where the harm of any residual impacts of a proposed scheme is not justified by the public benefits that would be provided, it will not be supported; and

b) Ensuring that appropriate archaeological investigations are carried out and in the event of significant and / or extensive remains being found they should be preserved in-situ in accordance with paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Supporting Statement.

1. A large majority of residents feel that it is important to protect the local heritage and character.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of the historic or listed buildings and features:

- *66% said "Very Important".*
- *30% said "Fairly Important"*

10.3 Sustaining Green Spaces and Gardens

Background

Through many years agriculture has created large areas of cultivated fields that surround Weston village and all the other settlements including Pontshill and Bromsash.

Some extensive gardens exist in the grounds of some of the historic buildings but are not open to the public, with the exception of Weston Hall which opens its gardens once a year. Penyard House also stands in large grounds which extend to the Weston Cross Inn at the centre of Weston village, creating the impression of open space, but the only public open space is provided by the community playing fields. There is potential to enhance these open spaces for the benefit of the community and the environment.

Policy SE3: Sustaining open spaces

a) The land known as Church Field and the parish recreation ground, including the play park and area around the village hall are designated within this Plan as Local Green Space, as defined in the NPPF, and are therefore protected from development;

b) In the event of significant and / or extensive archaeological remains being found, as defined in Policy SE2, the land surrounding the remains will be considered at a future review stage of the Plan for designation as Local Green Space;

c) Developers will be expected to provide or contribute to the provision of open space in accordance with Herefordshire Council's open space standards requirement; and

d) Where such space cannot be provided on site, contributions should be made to the provision, improvement/replacement, operation or maintenance of open space and play areas elsewhere within the Parish.

Supporting Statement.

A very large majority of residents consider that the protection of open space is important.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014
In the 2014 survey residents were asked about the importance of the protection and enhancement of green spaces and gardens:

- 69% said "Very Important".
- 19% said "Fairly Important"

10.4 Polytunnel Development

Background

In the 2014 residents' survey the most commonly cited matter of environmental concern was the proliferation of polytunnels.

Policy SE4 : Polytunnel Development

Further polytunnel development should comply with Policy SE1 and with the Herefordshire Council Polytunnels Supplementary Planning Document , December 2008.

Supporting Statements

1. Whilst it is acknowledged that polytunnels are an important part of the agricultural/horticultural economy the parish has become a focus for large areas of permanent and seasonal polytunnel cover which has had a significant impact in terms of the wider landscape and the amenities of local residents
2. It is therefore important that any further proposals for development of this kind be accompanied by detailed evidence demonstrating that the criteria in Policy SE4 can be satisfied.

10.5 Renewable Energy

Policy SE5: Renewable Energy

Renewable energy proposals that will benefit the community and businesses will be encouraged where:

a) The rural and/or settlement character of the locality is respected;
b) Local heritage, such as archaeological sites and historic buildings, including their settings, are not adversely affected;
c) Local and residential amenity is protected;
d) Any traffic that is generated can be accommodated safely upon the local road network;
e) The scale reflects the community's needs;
f) The biodiversity will not be adversely affected; and
g) Where renewable energy proposals are advanced that would involve tall structures, regard should be had to the transit routes of protected species, in particular bats, thereby ensuring the requirements of Policy SE1 criterion (e).

Supporting Statements

1. Renewable energy is not considered an important issue for the community in terms of creating sustainable development but is recognised as being beneficial by a significant minority and therefore should receive consideration as part of any new development.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014

When asked if there was a need for a local renewable energy supply, the response from the community was strongly in favour of:

- Ground heat pumps (83% in favour).
- Solar panels on existing public, agricultural and industrial buildings (81%)
- Domestic solar panels to provide power/heating (80%)
- There was a balanced view on Hydro-electric power (58%)

There was a generally negative response for other sources of renewable energy such as:

- Anaerobic digesters (41% in favour)
- Biomass plants (40%)
- Solar panels on dedicated fields (40%)
- Domestic wind turbines (29%),
- Commercial wind turbines (25%)

10.6 Flood Protection

Background

Surface water run-off has become more acute as rainfall has become more intense and energetic, causing flash flooding. Much of the surface area on which the rain falls has been engineered to shed water quickly into adjacent streams, overwhelming the watercourses and causing a high risk of flooding to low lying land and vulnerable properties.

Slowing water down to allow water to soak away and be released slowly into the watercourses is considered to be best practice. Mitigating measures can include buffer strips along watercourses, new ephemeral ponds, sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) and tree and hedge planting. These measures also reduce phosphates and other compounds from entering watercourses. Water quality is a threat to the Wye SAC, into which the streams from Weston under Penyard run.

Other flood prevention measures include:

- Maintaining the existing drainage culverts by employing a lengthsman, particularly after hedge cutting operations,
- Relocating gateways for farm vehicles in order to reduce field run off hot spots where practicable,

Hard surface farm tracks installed in highly vulnerable areas where farm traffic use is all year.
The main sewerage system is not accessible to most homes.

Policy SE6: Sustainable Water Management

a) Development should not cause or increase the risk of surface water flooding and the associated risk of pollution. Where such risks are known to exist and have been identified as a potential problem, developers will need to undertake detailed assessments in order to determine appropriate measures to be taken to address the risks and for these measures to be included within the planning applications;
b) Any risk of pollution arising from inadequate drainage or excessive run-off from fields or roads would need to be handled as above;
c) Developers will need to establish the capacity required to serve any new housing and work with the appropriate agencies to integrate with and possibly extend the existing network or to propose an alternative sewage disposal facility in accordance with the requirements of Herefordshire Council and the Water Authority;
d) Developers should utilise or contribute to sustainable drainage systems (SUDs) where this is practicable, including measures to support biodiversity; and
e) No development will be permitted which has risks of any detrimental impact on Rudhall and Walford Brooks unless those risks are mitigated to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency and the local planning authority.

Supporting Statements

Development that takes place in accordance with the above policies would lead to an improvement in the infrastructure that supports the parish community.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

Comments made by residents indicate that some of the facilities to handle storm water and foul water throughout the parish are inadequate and that this can result is localised flooding in several locations, including low lying land which frequently floods and some sites that have been identified as having potential for development.

Most residents living within the parish have not been affected by flooding in any form. However, a small number of residents have suffered flooding which has been caused mainly by the inability of the drains and ditches to handle surface water running off the fields and the roads. Although those affected are small in number, the misery, damage and inconvenience needs to be addressed and, where practical, every opportunity should be taken to do so within the Plan.

Section 11: Plan Implementation and Monitoring

Use of the Plan

For planning applications the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented primarily through decisions made by Herefordshire Council, in accordance with this Plan and the HC Core Strategy, unless there are significant material reasons for departing from their provisions. This plan will be used to steer public and private investment in infrastructure by Herefordshire Council and other agencies.

Weston under Penyard Parish Council will also use the Plan as the basis for responding to planning applications and for using any funding that may come to it through planning obligations or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), should a scheme for the latter be brought forward.

Regular Reviews of the Plan

The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan is a living document and as such will be reviewed at least every five years. It will be implemented over a long period and by different stakeholders and partners. It is not a rigid "blueprint" but provides a "direction for sustainable change" through its vision, objectives and strategy. Flexibility will be needed as new challenges and opportunities arise over the Plan period. Consultation with the community as circumstances change over time will be necessary. The review period will be crucial.

Implementation of the Plan

Implementation of the plan will need the co-operation of the Parish Council, Herefordshire Council and be used by developers, agencies and relevant members of the parish to shape the future. The Parish Council will be guided by the parishioners and wants their input into the implementation of plan, parish involvement is key to the success of the Neighbourhood Plan. The projects need to be driven by the parishioners with the support of the Parish Council.

As appropriate, working groups will be encourages to support the plan and projects. These groups will be involved in specific elements and projects with the intention of being led by parishioners with Parish Council support. People interested in being involved should contact the Parish Clerk and when specific details/project are being considered the Parish Council will advertise in the minutes, notice boards and Weston News for volunteers to work with the Parish Council to review and implement the details/projects.

Section 12: Conclusion

Weston under Penyard welcomes sustainable development and growth. A steady increase in the built environment, particularly within Weston village, has taken place continuously over more recent decades and indeed centuries, as the eclectic mix of housing demonstrates. It is accepted that more housing is needed and this plan sets out to meet the requirements as described in the HC Core Strategy in a way that reflects the particular housing needs of this community and those who wish to live here.

Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan aims to allow for appropriate development whilst both protecting and conserving:

- A sustainable community and rural way of life
- The nature of businesses which makes it possible for people to live and work in the parish
- A valuable tourist, heritage and leisure resource for the county and further afield, now and into the future
- An environment which supports a rich and diverse wildlife

Without the criteria for development set out in this plan and the Settlement Boundary (as revised in this Plan), the parish will not have the protection necessary to allow for the required growth in an appropriate, sustainable manner.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Assets of Community Value (Listed Buildings, historically interesting buildings and Monuments)

Appendix B Views and Vista that should be protected

Appendix C Glossary of Planning Terms

Appendix A Assets of Community Value (Listed Buildings, historically interesting buildings and Monuments)

(A) Listed Buildings

1. **Baptist Church A40, Ryeford**
   Grade II
2. **Barn on South Side of Farmyard at Bollitree Castle Farmhouse with Arcaded Farm Building Adjoining to**
   Grade II
3. **Barn on West Side of Farmyard and Curtain Wall Enclosing Yard at Bollitree Castle**
   Grade I
4. **Bill Mills**
   Grade II
5. **Bollitree Castle Farmhouse**
   Grade II*
6. **Building Extending to West at South-West Corner of Farmyard at Bollitree Castle**
   Grade II
7. **Cherry Orchard**
   Grade II
8. **Church of St Lawrence**
   Grade II*
9. **Cross Base Approximately 20 Metres South-East of Kingstone Cottages**
   Grade II
10. **Cross Base Approximately 75 Metres South-West of Rudhall House**
    Grade II
11. **Dovecote Approximately 50 Metres South of Bollitree Castle Farmhouse**
    Grade II
12. **Farm Building Approximately 20 Metres North-West of Weston Hall**
    Grade II
13. **Farm Building Approximately 5 Metres North of Weston Hall**
    Grade II
14. **Font, Approximately One Metre North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
    Grade DL
15. **Former Baptist Chapel to Rear of Baptist Church**
    Grade II
16. **Gates with Flanking Walls and Two Pairs of Piers Approximately 100 Metres South-West of Weston Hall**
    Grade II
17. **Gateway in Garden Wall on North Side of Road Approximately 75 Metres North-East of Bollitree Castle**
    Grade II
18. **Group of Two Chest Tombs Approximately 7 Metres North of West End of North Aisle of Church of St Lawrence**
    Grade II
19. **Group of Two Tomb Chests Approximately 10 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
    Grade II
20. **Lower Weston**
21. **Milestone (Cast Iron)**
    Grade II
22. **Milestone Approximately 20 Metres East of Weston House**
    Grade II

23. **Parkfields**
    Grade II
24. **Penyard Castle**
    Grade II
25. **Rudhall House (South Walled Gardens)**
    Grade I
26. **Street House**
    Grade II*
27. **Sunnyside (Bartwood Lane, Pontshill)**
    Grade II
28. **The Old Rectory**
    Grade II
29. **Tomb Chest Approximately 18 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
    Grade II
30. **Two Tomb Chest Approximately 10 Metres North of Tower of Church of St Lawrence**
    Grade II
31. **Walls Enclosing Garden South of Weston Hall, with Two Pairs of Gate Piers and Gates**
    Grade II
32. **Weston Hall**
    Grade II*

(B) <u>Ancient Monument</u>

1. **Ariconium (Roman town)**

(C) <u>Monuments</u>

The following monuments, unless otherwise described, are of the 17th century and of two storeys; the walls are of rubble and the roofs are covered with tiles or slates. Some of the buildings have exposed ceiling-beams and old chimney-stacks.

1. **Cottage on North side of the churchyard**
   Part timber-framing which is exposed on the N. and S. sides
2. **Cottage on the W. side of the road, 300 yards N.N.E. of the church**
   Partly of timber-framing, which is exposed on the N. and part of the E. wall.
3. **Cottage, two tenements, on the W. side of the road at Kingstone, nearly 1 m. N. of the church**
   Is of two storeys with cellars and attics and is dated 1700. The E. front is ashlar-faced and has numerous masons' marks. The roof is of unusual construction, being of a rude hammer-beam type with braces below and struts between the hammer-beams and collar.
4. **Cottage, on the E. side of the road, 40 yards S.W. of the church**
   Has a panel in the W. wall, with the initials and date: I. and H. T. 1698.
5. **Cottage, on the N. side of the road at Pontshill Marsh, nearly 1 m. S.E. of the church**
   Possibly of medieval origin, but was largely re-built in the 17th century; the roof is thatched. In the W. end is exposed framing showing a late development of the medieval crutch-construction.
6. **House, on the E. side of the road, 160 yards S.W. of (14), has been partly re-built**
   The W. half is original and has ashlar dressings and a shaped finial to the gable; the windows have late 17th-century frames with wooden mullions and transoms.

(D) <u>Important Buildings</u>

1. **Weston Cross Public House**
2. **Weston under Penyard C of E School (Victorian, built of stone)**
3. **Weston House**
4. **Lower Weston**

5. **Horse Trough. Steel Construction. North side of A40 just west of junction with Bury Hill Lane. OS Ref (189) 6366 2311.**
6. **Horse Trough. Stone construction. east side of The Street just north of dwelling "The Beechings". OS Ref (189) 6325 2354**
7. **The Village Hall (not an old building, but an Assets of Community Value)**

Appendix B Views and Vista that should be protected

1. Penyard Hill - views towards and from
2. Lea Bailey - views towards and from
3. St Lawrence's Church - views towards and from
4. Views eastward from Village Hall including May Hill, Lea Bailey and Pontshill
5. Views from Kingstone area towards Ross and Wales(Black Mountains/Skirrid)
6. A40 eastwards over green fields
7. Village as approached from Ross and from Ryeford
8. Village from Bury Hill Lane
9. Parkfields and the valley beyond from Pontshill and Ryeford

Appendix C Glossary of Planning Terms

Adoption - The final confirmation of a development plan by a local planning authority.

Affordable housing- includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Amenity Land - Land which is valued locally for its visual importance and contribution to the character of the area but may also have other uses i.e. formal or informal recreation, environmental, cultural and historical and for wildlife and nature conservation value.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
An area with statutory national landscape designation, the primary purpose of which is to conserve and enhance natural beauty. Together with National Parks, AONB represent the nation's finest landscapes. AONB are designated by the Natural England.

Ancient Woodland - Woodland known to have existed continually in a location since before 1600.

Annual Monitoring Report - A report that assesses the extent to which policies and proposals set out in Development Plan Documents are being achieved.

Aquifer - A layer of rock that can hold a large amount of water, which can be extracted subject to licence.

Archaeological interest - An area which holds or potentially holds evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation.

Best and most versatile Agricultural Land - Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Big Society - Aims to empower local people and communities, building a big society that takes power away from politicians and gives it to the people

Brownfield Land (and Sites) - land that has been previously developed.

Change of Use – a material change in the use of land or buildings that is significant for planning purposes e.g. from retail to residential

Communities and Local Government
'Communities and Local Government' is the Government department with responsibility for planning, housing, urban regeneration and local government ("DCLG").

Code for sustainable homes - The code is a national standard for the sustainable design and construction of new homes. The code aims to reduce our carbon emissions and create homes that are more sustainable.

Community facilities - Land and buildings used to help meet health, educational and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well-being of everyone in the community

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – allows Local Authorities to raise funds developers undertaking new building projects in their areas. Money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport schemes, schools, health centres, leisure centres and parks. Parishes with a neighbourhood plan will receive 25% of any community infrastructure levy arising from developments in their area compared to parishes without a neighbourhood plan who will receive 15%.

Community Right to Build Order - An Order which grants planning permission for a site specific development proposal or types of development

Conservation Area – an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which are preserved by local planning policies and guidance.

Core strategy - a Development Plan Document produced by Herefordshire Council in consultation with the community which sets out the strategic policies for the county. This forms part of the Local Development Framework.

Consultation statement - A document which needs to be submitted to Herefordshire Council with a draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. It sets out details of who was consulted, how they were consulted and the main issues and concerns raised and how they were addressed within the plan.

Developer contributions - Contributions required/received from development under a Section 106 agreement to be set aside for future works, services and maintenance directly related to development.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – Includes adopted Herefordshire Local Plan- Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Development Plans which are used to determine planning applications.

Environmental Impact Assessment - Evaluates the likely environmental impacts of the development, together with an assessment of how these impacts could be reduced

Evidence base - The background information that any Development Plan Document is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, such as play areas or housing mix, facts about an area or views from stakeholders; for example SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments).

Flood Risk Assessment - An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Greenfield site - Land where there has been no previous development, often in agricultural use

Green infrastructure - A network of green spaces and other environmental features designed and managed as multi-functional resources providing a range of environmental and quality of life benefits for the local community. This can include parks, open spaces, woodlands, nature reserves, playing fields, allotments and private gardens.

Green-space - Those parts of an area which are occupied by natural, designed or agricultural landscape as opposed to built development; open space, parkland, woodland, sports fields, gardens, allotments and the like.

Groundwater protection zone - Areas of underground natural water to be protected to maintain water supplies from aquifer.

Habitats Regulations Assessment - Habitats Regulations Assessment assesses the impact of implementing a plan or policy on international protected sites for nature conservation. In Herefordshire, this would apply to Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). This is to ensure that plans will not result in significant damage to protected wildlife sites.

Historic park and garden - Gardens, parks and designated landscapes which are of national historical interest and are included in English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of special historical interest in England.

Independent Examination – An assessment of a proposed Neighbourhood Plan carried out by an independent person to consider whether a Neighbourhood Plan meets the required conformity and legal requirements.

Infrastructure - Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.

Listed Building - building of special architectural or historic interest.

Local Development Framework (LDF) - The name for the collection of documents which guide the future development in the county.

Local Green Space - Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Herefordshire Local Plan - Core Strategy - A Development Plan Document which is produced by Herefordshire Council in consultation with the community which sets out the strategic policies for the county. This forms part of the Local Development Framework.

Local Planning Authority - Local government body responsible for formulating planning policies and controlling development; a district council, metropolitan council, county council, a unitary authority or national park authority. For Weston under Penyard this is Herefordshire Council.

Local referendum - A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject a particular proposal/plan.

Local Transport Plan - Plan that sets out Herefordshire Council's policies on transport on a five yearly basis.

Low cost market housing - Private housing designed to be at a lower cost than open market housing to meet the needs of specific household groups.

Material consideration - Factors which are relevant to planning such as sustainability, design and traffic impacts.

Mitigation - Measures taken to reduce adverse impacts for example changing the way the development is carried out to minimise adverse effects through appropriate methods or timing.

Monitoring - Procedures by which the consequences of policies and proposals are checked on a continuous or periodic basis to assess their effectiveness and impact.

Natural England - A statutory adviser on landscape in England, with responsibility for landscape designations such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts. Also concerned with England's future landscapes and involved in planning policy and a range of environmental land management projects.

National Planning Policy Framework - Sets out national planning policy and how these are expected to be applied. Provides a planning policy framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Neighbourhood Area - Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will relate.

Neighbourhood Development Order - An Order through which parish councils can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Neighbourhood Development Plan - A local plan prepared by a parish council for a particular Neighbourhood Area, which includes land use topics

Open Space - All space of public value, including public landscaped areas, playing fields, parks and play areas, and also including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which can offer opportunities for sport and recreation or can also act as a visual amenity and a haven for wildlife.

Parish Plan - Community led plans which contain a wide range of community issues and aspirations. There is no requirement for parish plans to include land use policies. Endorsed Parish Plans can be material consideration in determining planning applications.
N. B. The Weston under Penyard Parish Plan has been endorsed by the Parish Council and Herefordshire Council.

Permitted development - Certain minor building works that do not require a planning application.

Planning condition - A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission or a condition included in a Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning Obligation (section 106) - A legally enforceable obligation entered into under section 106 of the Town and County Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Planning Permission - Formal approval granted by a council (e.g. Herefordshire Council) in allowing a proposed development to proceed

Public Open Space - Open space to which the public has free access.

Registered Housing Providers - Not-for-profit organisations providing homes mainly to those in housing need

Section 106 Agreement – Planning obligation under section 106 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, secured by a local planning authority through negotiations with a developer to offset the public cost of permitting a development proposal. Sometimes developers self-impose obligations to pre-empt objections to planning permission being granted.

Settlement boundary – Settlement or development boundaries (village envelopes) seek to set clear limits to towns and villages. They are designed to define the existing settlement and to identify areas of land where development may be acceptable in principle, subject to other policies and material planning considerations.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - SSSIs are the county's very best wildlife and geological sites. They include some of the most spectacular and beautiful habitats.

Spatial planning - Brings together all policies and programmes which have an impact on the environment in which you work, live or play.

Special Areas of Conversation (SAC) - SACs are sites designated under the Habitats Directives on the conservation of natural habitats and of fauna and flora

Soundness – The soundness of a statutory local planning document is determined by the planning inspector against three criteria: whether the plan is justified (founded on robust and credible evidence and be the most appropriate strategy), whether the plan is effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored), and whether it is consistent with national and local planning policy.

Stakeholder - People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and national organisations and government departments

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – A formal statement of the process of community consultation undertaken in the preparation of a statutory plan..
Statutory consultee - This is a body that must be consulted on plans and applications which could affect their interests. For example Highways Agency, Environment Agency.

Statutory development plan - The plan(s) which have been adopted by Herefordshire Council and used to determine planning applications and guide future development

Strategic Environmental Assessment - Environmental assessment as applied to policies, plans and programmes. This has been in place since the European SEA directive (2001/42/EC)

Sustainable Communities - Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. Communities that meet the needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment and contribute to a high quality of life.

Sustainable Development - An approach to development that aims to allow economic growth without damaging the environment or natural resources. Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Sustainable urban Drainage System (SuDS) - The collection of surface water and its natural drainage back into the ground via soak-away or to existing watercourses using infiltration methods where necessary.

Use Classes Order - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987(as amended) is the statutory instrument that defines the categories of use of buildings or land for the purposes of planning legislation. Planning permission must be obtained to change the use of a building or land to another class.

Village Design Statement - A document which contains a description and analysis of the distinctive features of an area and outlines design guidance for further development. Endorsed Village Design Statements can form material consideration in determining planning applications.

Vision - An overarching statement or series of statements describing the aspirations of an area in 15/20 years' time.

Windfall sites - Any area of land that is suitable for development within the terms of planning policies, but has not specifically been identified and allocated within a Development Plan Document. The development of these can be unpredictable.

NOTES

1. This glossary is neither a statement of law nor an interpretation of the law, and its status is only an introductory guide to some planning issues and other matters that might be relevant to the Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan
2. Herefordshire Council has produced a Glossary of planning terms that can be viewed on its web-site; Herefordshire Council - Neighbourhood Planning – Guidance Note 18

Annex 1: Neighbourhood Planning Projects

1 Introduction

Context

Neighbourhood planning policies, such as those contained in Sections 5 to 10 of this Plan, can only influence development that requires a planning application. The consultations with the public have re-iterated the other concerns which the Parishioners have and the projects are designed to address these concerns.

This non-statutory Annex of the Neighbourhood Plan provides a structure to bring people together to develop the ideas as projects to enhance and sustain the parish through the life of the Plan.

Issues Raised by Residents

During the consultation process of this Neighbourhood Plan, the residents enthusiastically expressed their views on a wide range of issues, some of which cannot be actioned through planning policies alone. 63% of all residents aged 16 and over returned a questionnaire covering these issues. They also provided some 4,000 written "free text" comments to deliver their individual opinions. Some of the residents said that the Parish Plan 2006 and the Housing Assessment of 2010 were still relevant.

Traffic has predominantly been highlighted by Parishioners as being a concern. This topic cannot exclusively be addressed by the planning policies so will be included within the projects. Some of these traffic issues are matters that cannot be controlled by the Parish Council alone and require action by Herefordshire Council and other agencies.

2 Neighbourhood Planning Projects

This Annex contains the core issues established from the consultation which the Parish Council feel can be reviewed and developed once the plan is confirmed.

The aim is for the Parish Council to work with residents, business and stakeholders to develop a sustainable inclusive parish which will improve on the issues which have been highlighted. To develop these projects. The Parish Council will need parishioners to engage with the Council as a working group. These projects will develop over time and working groups will be set up when necessary to develop the theme.

The Parish Council wants parishioners to drive the projects and actions developed through the projects will need to be evaluated for sustainability and be reasonable in relation to cost and consideration of others within the parish. When projects are developed funding / grant options will be investigated and fund raising will be considered an option. Further details of these working groups is provided in Section 11.

Project 1 Road Safety

Background

The Parish Plan 2006 reported a wide range of residents' concerns and some proposed actions regarding road safety. The 2014 questionnaire again highlighted the two main safety issues as traffic speed and pedestrian safety.

Traffic speed and the associated safety issues have been a long standing concern of the residents and in the 2014 survey nearly three quarters of the 556 respondents cited traffic speed as a road traffic concern in the parish. Options for controlling traffic speed should be considered in the project development with the aim of reducing the risk of accidents.

Residents are concerned about pedestrian safety, in particular the footpaths and crossing the A40 at points of high risk such as Penyard Gardens bus stops, School Lane and Church Lane.

Options considered will need to be evaluated against effectiveness and cost will need considering when the working group and Parish Council action suggestions.

Pedestrian safety is an area which the previous Highways Agency has evaluated since the Parish Plan 2006 and any solutions will need to take into consideration the fact that the A40 is the main road from Gloucester to Hereford. Solutions should consider ways to link the school, bus routes and village pub.

Project 1 Road Safety

a) The Parish Council will continue to work with the parishioners to highlight and increase road safety.
b) The Parish Council is aware of the concerns about road safety particularly regarding crossing the A40 and the speed of vehicles.
c) They will work with the Highways Agency and Herefordshire Council to ensure development supports road safety and work with the parishioners and businesses to ensure harmony and sustainability.
d) The Parish Council will review safety measures in the parish and evaluate options highlighted by parishioners to improve safety.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

To support the development of traffic speed control the working groups should consider the options highlighted in the Neighbourhood Plan Questionnaire as shown below:

i. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)
ii. Improved or extended pavements in the villages
iii. Village gateways (e.g. signs, marker posts, build-outs, etc. to notify motorists that they are entering a village)
iv. 3-2-1 warning signs to speed limit sign
v. Reduced speed limits
vi. Speed bumps

Project 2 Services and Facilities

Background

The population of the parish has increased significantly over the past decade and will continue to increase within the duration of the Plan. The Parish is a spread out area and the working group should consider linking areas of the parish effectively in a sustainable manner.

Part of Weston village now has fibre optic broadband and extension to all areas of the parish would be a significant improvement for all residents. Mobile phones are important for communication between residents and businesses and mobile phone coverage is variable, the Parish Council and parishioners need to work together to encourage Mobile phone networks to increase and improve coverage.

Weston village is relatively close to Ross-on-Wye and options to encourage cycling, horse riding and walking will be considered. By encouraging these activities and improved facilities the parishioners may reduce their number of vehicle trips which would have a beneficial impact on carbon footprint and the environment.

Project 2 Services and Facilities

The Parish Council will work with parishioners to try to improve facilities within the village and support the continuation of the school, pub, church and recreation ground.
Roads will need to be maintained and we will work with the Highways to ensure efficient repairs, including effective use of the Lengthsman Scheme.
Parishioners will be invited to contribute to by bringing forward community projects.

Community feedback from the Questionnaire Project (August 2014)

Facilities in the village were highlighted as being an area parishioners would like to see improved. The main problems are
Facilities for young people
Cycleways
Broadband
Mobile phone reception
Access for disabled people
Leisure and recreational facilities
Public footpaths
Bridleways

Project 3 Sustaining the Rural Environment

The Parish Council understands the importance of the rural environment and understands the need for balance between residents and business; this was re-iterated by the responses to the questionnaire.

The Parish Council will endeavour to ensure the continuation of the recreation field within the parish and promote open spaces within development.

There are some buildings in the parish that are cherished by local people for their architectural and/or historic character. When reviewing plans to develop or change historic buildings the Parish Council will encourage sympathetic changes which retain the core characteristics of the building, however development will be preferable to buildings becoming redundant.

Project 3 Sustaining the Rural Environment

a) The Parish Council will continue to consider the impact of projects and plans on the rural environment and work with parishioners to ensure harmony between residents and businesses.
b) When planning applications are considered the Parish Council will review the opportunities to develop recreation and open spaces with the plans and make suggestions as appropriate.
c) Development opportunities will be encouraged to consider minimising impact on the views and vistas within the parish.

Project 4 Community Right to Bid

In addition to Neighbourhood Planning the Localism Act 2011 introduced a Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value) which aims to ensure that buildings and amenities can be kept in public use and remain an integral part of community life, stating that the closure or sale of such buildings or amenities can create lasting damage in communities.

Community organisations and parish councils can nominate an asset to be included in a 'list of assets of community value'. The local authority will then be required to maintain this list. If the owner of a listed asset then wants to sell the asset a moratorium period will be triggered during which the asset cannot be sold to any party (although in some cases a tenant may have a preferential right to bid). This is intended to allow community groups time to develop a proposal and raise the required capital to bid for the property when it comes onto the open market at the end of that period.

In the 2014 questionnaire particularly highlighted the school, recreation ground, village hall, pub and church as facilities they felt were important to the community.

Project 4 - Community Right to Bid

The Parish Council will consider any properties or areas of land to be identified as assets of community value for possible Right to Bid activity (under the Localism Act 2011) and will apply to Herefordshire Council for registration of such assets if it is considered appropriate.